

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1895.

THE LADY OF LAS CRUCES.

I.

THE through train from the northern border was steadily rushing along the great plateau of Mexico, and, having left Leon behind, had entered upon the wide plain which extends southward for many a league, when one of two travellers who were seated together in the smoking-room of the Pullman remarked, as he glanced over a newspaper in his hand,—

“It seems that we shall find Mexico very much *en fête* when we reach there to-morrow.”

The speaker, a tall blond young man, in his clothes of London cut might by a careless glance have been taken for an Englishman, but closer observation would have perceived, beneath a superficial resemblance, certain differences—especially a greater alertness of eye and manner—which mark the American type of the transplanted Anglo-Saxon. Education and long residence abroad had, however, approximated Leslie Brooke, without any conscious attempt at imitation, very closely to that English model which it is the exceedingly conscious effort of a number of his countrymen to imitate, besides giving him a certain cosmopolitan habit of mind which was agreeably reflected in his ease of manner.

The man whom he addressed belonged evidently to a different race. Dark, slender, graceful, he would, to one unacquainted with the minor differences of national type, have passed for a native of any country of Latin Europe, but he was in fact a Mexican of Spanish blood and high social rank. Having been for some time attached to the Mexican legation in Washington, he spoke English fluently, and at once responded to the remark of his companion,—

“Oh, very much so indeed. It is the inauguration of the President; and since we have seldom had the pleasure, thus far in our history, of inaugurating a President peaceably, the occasion seems to

call for some brilliancy of celebration. You are fortunate in reaching Mexico just at this time."

"I am not sure of that," observed Brooke, doubtfully. "Occasions of public celebration are not always the best times for reaching a strange city. One is likely, for example, to have difficulty in securing good quarters."

"I think not," said the young Mexican. "You must not imagine that this is like the inaugurations in Washington, when a vast crowd from the provinces flock to the capital. There will be no such rush of people to Mexico. A few notables from the different States will come,—a few governors and generals,—but no one else. The people are indifferent, for you must remember that the election of a President with us does not, as with you, represent the triumph of a party after a heated popular contest, but rather the result of a triumph that was won years ago on the battle-field, and which is therefore regarded as entirely a foregone conclusion."

"A diplomatic way of stating that as a popular election it is a farce," said the American, smiling. "But, one is inclined to ask, why the farce? Why should not General Diaz declare himself dictator for life, and so dispense with a recurring form of election that means nothing?"

"Because forms are useful," replied the other, sententiously. "If General Diaz proclaimed himself dictator, he would at once have a revolution on his hands. The people might not care, but his rivals for power would, and he is not likely to be guilty of the folly of putting a weapon into their hands. But, instead of discussing the political system of our country, let me ask if your friend and yourself would not like to attend the ball which will be given in honor of the President to-morrow night. I have hastened my journey in order to reach Mexico in time for it, and I can easily obtain cards for you if you care to attend."

"Thanks, you are very kind," responded Brooke, who was still young enough to find the suggestion of a ball attractive. "I shall be delighted to do so, but I can't answer for my friend, who is rather *blasé* with regard to balls, as in fact to most matters.—But here he comes to answer for himself."

At the door of the smoking-room there indeed appeared at this moment a man of very quiet and unassuming aspect, but in whom a person of fine perception would have detected unmistakable signs of distinction. A certain repose of manner, without the faintest shade of self-assertion, spoke of the confidence of assured position and the habit of receiving from others a consideration which it was not necessary to claim, while his face possessed in striking degree the charm of refinement and intelligence, and the clear gray eyes had the penetrating regard of one who was an artist, a thinker, and perhaps somewhat of a dreamer besides. There had been a time when, despite the fact that Fortune had made him so rich a man that he was deprived of the most common and potent of all incentives to exertion, Ralph Ingraham had seemed to take as much interest in the pursuit of art as if his prospect of daily bread hung upon the success of his labors. But this ardor—

as was only to be expected, people said—had completely died out. He, who once appeared to like nothing better than to see life with the eyes of a painter and to wander through strange lands with his easel and white umbrella as unpretendingly as any vagrant son of the Bohemia he loved, had suddenly thrown art aside, as if it were but a toy of fancy instead of a noble and lasting reality, and if he had touched brush or pencil for several years past no one was aware of the fact. At present he had just returned to America from a long sojourn in Europe, and it was owing to the eager solicitation of his friend Leslie Brooke—for friends they were, although on a basis of mutual toleration rather than mutual sympathy—that he had consented to accompany the latter to Mexico. At least he told Brooke, and perhaps himself, that this was the case. But deep in his inner consciousness he knew that there were other causes drawing him back to this land, which possessed associations for him the lasting strength and reality of which he had a passionate desire to test.

Catching Brooke's last words above the rattle of the train, he looked at that gentleman inquiringly as he dropped into a seat. "What is it that I have come in time to answer?" he asked.

"Whether you care to attend a ball to be given in Mexico to-morrow night in honor of the inauguration of President Diaz," Brooke replied. "Señor Rivera offers to procure invitations for us."

"Señor Rivera is most kind," said Ingraham, with a ceremonious inclination toward the young Mexican. "Since you have a strong desire to see something of social life in Mexico, I presume that you have accepted his offer without hesitation."

"For myself, yes," Brooke returned. "But I was remarking as you entered that I could not answer for you, as you have developed a great capacity of being bored by social functions."

"Generally speaking, true," Ingraham assented. "But in this instance I think it possible that I might not be bored, since my acquaintances in Mexico are few, and I should only be a looker-on, pleasing my eyes by a brilliant spectacle as long as it amused me, and at liberty to retire when it ceased to do so."

"There would be no necessity, apart from your inclination, why you should be only a looker-on," observed Señor Rivera, with a greater deference of manner than he had exhibited in talking to Brooke. "It would give me great pleasure to present you to the best people of Mexico. In offering cards of invitation to Mr. Brooke, I had no intention of limiting my services merely to that."

Again Ingraham bowed. "You recall to me, señor," he said, "the many acts of courtesy which I experienced in my former visit to your country. I perceive that it is only necessary to re-enter Mexico in order to experience the same courtesy again. It would be churlish to decline your kindness. We shall be happy to accept the friendly services which I am aware that you are so well qualified to render."

"I have certainly the pleasure of knowing everybody in Mexico worth knowing," said the young *attaché*, twisting the upward-curling ends of his carefully tended moustache with a slight air of coxcomby.

"It is true that I have been out of the country for several years, but society with us changes little. The families which hold social supremacy are always the same."

"When I was in Mexico several years ago," said Ingraham, in a reminiscent manner, "I chanced to meet the representative of one of your old families,—Don Luis Fernandez del Valle, of Michoacan. Do you know him?"

"Every one knows the Fernandez del Valle," replied Rivera. "They are one of the oldest families in the country. But they suffered great losses in the revolutions, and Don Luis has buried himself for years on his hacienda in Michoacan."

"It was at his hacienda that I met him," said Ingraham. "He proved himself a very gracious host as well as fine gentleman. At that time I heard that he had political aspirations, had been to Mexico and, it was understood, offered his support to the ruling powers. I fancied he would have held some official position before this."

"Now that you speak of it," said the other, knitting his dark, slender brows with an effort of recollection, "I recall having heard something of the same kind; but these things come to one's ears vaguely when one is far from home. Ah!"—he made a sudden exclamation,— "how could I forget! Don Luis Fernandez del Valle is at this time Senator from Michoacan. I now remember perfectly the announcement."

"He is then in Mexico at the present time?"

"Most probably; I should think certainly."

"Ah!" said Ingraham. His interest in the subject seemed to end at this point. He turned his head and gazed meditatively through the window beside him, appearing to become absorbed in contemplation of the scene without.

It was a scene which might well have absorbed the attention of any one. Upon the altar of the west a gorgeous sunset flamed like a sacrificial fire,—a bed of deepest crimson, flecked and dashed with burning gold,—from which a great radiance flowed over the wide plain, bounded on each side by mountains that in the transfiguring glow became as dream-like heights of carven amethyst. The vast stretch of verdant land, the feathery trees, the glimpses here and there of shining water, and the groups passing along the white, level roads,—sandalled, *zarape*-draped men, veiled women riding *burros*, great wooden carts drawn by oxen, horsemen who looked as if they had ridden booted and spurred out of a romance,—all were bathed in a flood of light which pervaded the whole atmosphere and lent to the picture an almost unearthly charm. It was a typical Mexican scene, and while Ingraham gazed he felt as if all intervening memories rolled away, and as if it had been but yesterday that his eyes rested on these vast plains which suggest all the primitive drama of human history, where the harvests of the world might be reaped, or the armies of the world marshalled, on these majestic sierras, so heavenly in the beauty of their distant tints, so rugged and full of awe when approached, on these walled towns with their towers of slender grace and Oriental domes, standing against an exquisite background of violet hills, on these idyllic stretches of

field and pasture, and the figures full of picturesque color which move across them. All these things appeared to him as they must appear to every one who, having seen them once, returns after long absence to this land, which is unchanging as the changeless East, like things familiar as the memories of infancy,—familiar, too, not from personal observation alone, but because they touch subtle chords of association with all that we have unconsciously dreamed of the history and poetry of the past.

The associations that dwelt for Ingraham in every line of the scene were, however, stronger even than this. For what he saw was not so much the sunset-steeped plain and purple mountains that lay before his actual vision, as the fortress-like walls of an ancient house, its courts, corridors, rooms,—a sudden flood of radiance upon a picture every line and tint of which rose before him as if burned into his memory, and a girl in an antique costume, yet fresh in her beauty as an opening rose, standing before the portrait, as if its original had been restored to life after long centuries of death. It is impossible to conceive any reality of the present more vivid than this recollection of the past was to him, as he looked out over the Mexican hills and plains. And yet he had dreamed that this memory had lost its keenness with the lapse of time, and that the episode in his life which it recalled, overlaid by later interests, had grown dim! But, whether “desperately wicked” or not, there is surely nothing on earth more deceitful than the human heart. Who has not fondly imagined that he had forgotten or lived down some past pain, until, roused by a chance touch into vivid life again, it has proved as powerful to wound as in the first dark hour of agony? So it was with Ingraham now. The edifice of forgetfulness in which he had fancied himself secure, dropped around him like a shattered house of cards, and the awakened past seized upon him again with a force which startled and dismayed him. “My God!” he said to himself, as one who is face to face with a reality which cannot be evaded, “have I forgotten *nothing*? Is that folly never to be lived down? Then it is well that I have come back. When memory is so persistent, there is but one heroic cure,—to bring it in contact with reality. Only so can one learn how much of what assumes to be memory is but imagination. For I might believe that there was some infernal magic in that picture, so strong is the spell that, through it, has been cast upon me, if I did not know that the chief spell is in my own fancy. But I am aware of the tricks my fancy can play, and I have long been sure that it was tricking me *then*, as it is tricking me now in this insane folly of remembrance. I must prove this to myself beyond a possibility of doubt, and there is only one way of proving it,—to see again, at any cost, the woman who has bewitched me. When I see her, when I learn, as I surely shall learn, of what commonplace material is formed the creature who seemed to me so wonderful, the phantom of my imagination will drop down dead and trouble me no more. It is a remedy which has never failed; and I am confident that it will not fail me now.”

II.

"Upon my word," said Leslie Brooke, in a tone of mingled surprise and admiration, "this is very brilliant! One might fancy one's self at a state ball in Europe. How well these people seem to understand doing this sort of thing!"

"And how well these fine old Mexican buildings lend themselves to decoration!" said Ingraham, as he glanced around the stately ball-room into which the great court of the ancient custom-house had been transformed, and which, with its draperies, paintings, and masses of tropical plants, its floods of light and perfume and flowers, made an effective setting for the brilliant throng that filled it,—an exceedingly well-dressed and well-mannered throng, as Brooke did not fail to observe with his quick and socially practised eye. The hour was late, the Presidential party had arrived, and the dancing was well under way, while the air seemed pulsating with the floods of music that rose and fell unceasingly from the two orchestras that played alternately.

Pausing near one of the massive columns which, emblazoned with the names of the battles won by General Diaz, surrounded the apartment, the two strangers stood for some time watching the gay scene with an interest which for Brooke at least was quickened by its novelty, when their late travelling companion suddenly appeared beside them.

"At last!" he cried. "I have been looking for you for an hour. But the crowd is so great it is difficult to find any one. You wish to dance, of course. I shall be happy to introduce you to partners. I have already obtained permission from several ladies to introduce to them two distinguished Americans."

"One distinguished American will be happy to profit by your kindness, I am sure," said Ingraham. "But I must beg you to excuse me. I seldom dance, and never in a crowd. I am sufficiently amused in looking on."

"But if you do not desire to dance you will wish to meet some of our noted people," said the friendly *attaché*. "This is an excellent opportunity to do so. I will present you to any one whom you care to know,—the President, the ministers, any of our distinguished generals, or any of the beautiful women, of whom there are many present."

"My eyes assure me of that fact," replied Ingraham, gallantly; "but, for the present at least, I am satisfied with admiring both beauty and valor from a distance. Later, perhaps—"

He paused abruptly, and so sudden and great a change came over his face that his two companions could only regard him for a moment with surprise, while he stood motionless as if transfixed, staring before him with the intent gaze of one who is struck by the appearance of some object equally unexpected and startling. Both men instinctively followed the direction of his eyes with their own, and both forgot him at once, as their glance fell upon the person who had evidently produced so strong an effect upon him.

It was a woman of the most striking beauty, who, leaning upon the arm of a tall and stately man, was crossing at that moment the open space in the centre of the floor. The crowd seemed to fall away

on each side, as if involuntarily yielding such homage as is paid to royalty to one so royal of aspect, and so royal, too, in manner; for, except among those who from infancy have been accustomed to be centres of observation whenever and wherever they appear, it would be difficult to find such superb composure of bearing as distinguished this woman who now walked like an empress across the crowded room. Those who were able to turn their attention from the beauty of her face, with its large dark eyes and crown of golden hair, were struck by the fashion of her dress, which, even in a day of revived antiquities, was strikingly picturesque, as well as magnificent, and had either been designed by a consummate artist in costume or copied closely from some ancient picture, with only such modifications as later fashion demanded. The rich brocade, the rare old lace and shining jewels of which it was composed, made an incomparable frame for a loveliness that seemed also a revival of the past in its distinction and perfection. A low, irrepressible murmur of admiration and inquiry was heard on all sides. "Who is she?" those who did not know asked wonderingly of others. Brooke, turning to Rivera, repeated the same question.

"What an astonishingly beautiful woman!" he exclaimed. "Who is she?"

It was a moment before Rivera, gazing in curiously compounded surprise and admiration, replied. Then, "I have no idea," he said. "I never saw her before, but that is General Herrera she is with. She must be a stranger; some foreigner of rank, perhaps. She cannot be a Mexican of any position, and of such appearance, and I not know her."

"She is, however, a Mexican," said Ingraham, speaking very quietly. "She is the wife of Don Luis Fernandez del Valle."

"Ah!" ejaculated the young man, drawing in his breath with a quick sound as if of a suddenly enlightened intelligence. "That explains it. I have heard that Don Luis married some one obscure and unknown, but of marvellous beauty. And it is true. She is of a most marvellous beauty."

"She is like a Titian or Velasquez picture," said Brooke. "There is nothing modern about her. She has not only the general features and coloring, but she has 'the grand air,'—that air which all those portraits possess, and which I have never seen in equal degree in a living woman."

"It is the setting of the head upon the neck, the grace and loveliness of the lines of the shoulders, that give such a majesty of bearing," said Rivera, critically. "And her costume—which is one of the most beautiful in the room—produces in a degree the effect of which you speak."

"No," said Brooke. "Her costume accords perfectly with her appearance, but does not produce it. I have never seen a more striking instance of the revival of a type. Here is Ingraham, who is an artist. Ask him if I am not right."

"Perfectly right," replied Ingraham, with a calmness which gave little insight into the tumult of his thoughts.

And that they should have been in tumult was not strange, for he

had not only seen again with startling unexpectedness the woman whose hold upon his imagination had never relaxed since the old days at Las Cruces, but he had also seen, not the *Cármen* whom he had then painted, but the *Marquésa* of the Velasquez portrait,—the *Marquésa* more wonderfully revived into new and vivid life than ever he had imagined to be possible. Striking as the resemblance between the two had been in the past, there had also been an unlikeness which he was successful enough to bring out upon his canvas,—the unlikeness of a girl whose deeper experiences of life were yet to come and a woman who had sounded the depths of all that life could give, and in whose eyes there dwelt a great and imperious disdain for the power which had wearied and the passion which had betrayed. The man whose keen glance first perceived both the likeness and the unlikeness now saw as clearly that the unlikeness had diminished and the likeness grown closer and deeper since he looked his last upon the girl standing in the sunset light, clad in the dead woman's dress, before her portrait. It was not *Cármen* but the portrait which he beheld now, not only, as then, line for line and tint for tint of physical resemblance, but with the deeper spiritual likeness so much developed that its effect was almost to appall him. For as he gazed there returned to him the old thrill of superstition, of something that touched upon the borders of mystery too deep for even conjecture to pierce. He recalled *Cármen's* wild, persistent fancy that some influence projected from the portrait or bequeathed by the original fashioned and moulded her, whether she would or no, and he remembered also how the same influence had seemed to fall upon himself when he first looked upon that picture of which the living copy now passed before him.

He was roused from these thoughts by Rivera, who was observing him rather curiously. "Since Mr. Ingraham knows Don Luis Fernandez del Valle," he said, "I infer that he is also acquainted with this lady."

"I had the pleasure of knowing her before she became the wife of Don Luis," Ingraham replied. "But since her marriage I have never seen her until to-night."

"But you will of course lose no time in renewing your acquaintance with her," suggested Brooke, "and in asking permission to present a friend—Señor Rivera will probably not object if I say two friends?"

"On the contrary, I shall be deeply indebted if Mr. Ingraham will be good enough to present me," Rivera answered.

But Ingraham did not evince any disposition to make himself of service to his friends in the manner thus frankly indicated. To approach here, in this garish ball-room filled with strains of music and tread of dancers, the woman with whom he had parted in the deepening twilight of Las Cruces with words of despairing appeal, was, he felt, an impossibility, a jarring discordance too great to be encountered. With a shade of stiffness, he said,—

"I have no intention of recalling myself to the recollection of this lady. I knew her under very different circumstances, and it is possible that she might not desire to recognize me, now that she is transformed into a *grande dame*."

"You must have played a very modest rôle in your acquaintance with her, if she could possibly fancy herself too much elevated to recognize you," said Rivera, smiling; "although it is true that sudden elevations have very often the effect of turning the heads of those who experience them."

"You misunderstand me," said Ingraham, a little haughtily. "Doña Carmen, I am sure, suffers from no such intoxication. When I knew her she was a young, unformed girl, in an obscure social position,—although, as you are probably aware, she is connected by blood with the Fernandez del Valle,—but even then one who was not blind could plainly perceive that Nature had fitted her for a different part in life. She only knew me, however, as a wandering painter, and might readily think me presumptuous in claiming her acquaintance."

"Then the sooner she is undeceived and learns who Mr. Ingraham is, the better," observed Rivera. "And, as it chances, here comes Don Luis Fernandez del Valle himself: I think I understood you to say that you know him quite well?"

It seemed fate that took the matter out of Ingraham's hands. It was indeed Don Luis, handsome and distinguished as of old, who advanced directly toward them at the moment. Seeing that to avoid the meeting was impossible, Ingraham, calling to his aid the self-command that at a critical juncture rarely failed him, stepped forward and greeted his former host.

There was not an instant's hesitation or constraint on the part of the Mexican. He looked surprised but sincerely pleased, and returned the greeting with the utmost cordiality.

"Señor Ingraham!" he exclaimed. "This is an unexpected pleasure! I was not aware that you were in Mexico."

"I have only arrived to-day," Ingraham replied. "It is my first return to the country since my visit to Las Cruces. After several years in Europe, I have come back to see if Mexico has lost any of its charm by comparison with the older lands."

"Since you have so recently arrived, it is too early to ask whether or not you find the charm diminished," said Don Luis. "You will at least discover little change."

"It is possible change that one has most to fear in Mexico," said Ingraham. "And that holds true in all lands of one's friends when one returns after long absence. Your family, señor, I hope that they are well?"

"A thousand thanks, they are all very well. My mother, with the older children, is at Las Cruces; but I am at present residing in Mexico, with my wife—you are aware that I am married to Doña Carmen Rosa?"

If that ancient rivalry which ended in victory so complete for Don Luis found any expression in these words, the finest observation could not have detected it. Nor was the least trace of such recollection apparent in the composure of Ingraham's reply:

"I hope that it is not too late to offer my congratulations. I had the pleasure of seeing Doña Carmen a moment ago, as she passed across the room. But permit me, señor, to present to you my friend Mr.

Brooke, who has accompanied me to Mexico. Señor Rivera, who is attached to your legation at Washington, you probably already know."

"For myself personally," said Rivera, bowing, "I cannot claim recognition from Señor Fernandez del Valle, but my father and brothers are, I believe, known to him."

"You are Don Alfredo," said Don Luis, extending his hand. "Your family are well known to me, and yourself by name.—Mr. Brooke, I am happy to make your acquaintance, and trust that you may like our country as well as your friend Señor Ingraham likes it. And now"—addressing the latter—"will you not come and renew your acquaintance with my wife, who will be pleased to see one whom we have so much reason to hold in remembrance and regard?"

If Ingraham smiled with the old, familiar sense of somewhat grim amusement at these words and the recollection of a peculiar indebtedness to himself which they implied, no one perceived the slight play of his lips as he replied that nothing would give him more pleasure than to pay his respects to Doña Carmen.

III.

It was as one in a dream that Ingraham found himself approaching Carmen. He had so long endeavored to reason himself into a belief that the strange witchery which had taken possession of him during his sojourn at Las Cruces had been in great if not in chief degree the effect of his own imagination, that it was nothing less than a shock to behold absolute proof of the reality of all he had seen and felt during that unforgettable episode. One sight of Carmen had been enough to convince him that his imagination, great as he knew its power to be, had not played him any trick. It had not exaggerated her singular beauty, its wonderful resemblance to the Velasquez portrait, nor its power over himself. Of the last especially he had immediate evidence in the remembered thrill which he had first known when standing before the portrait of the Marquésa in the *sala* at Las Cruces.

Was it part of the old spell, or only due to the new perception of her deepened likeness to the portrait, that he felt as if he were approaching the Marquésa rather than Carmen, as he crossed the ball-room by the side of Don Luis, with Brooke and Rivera following, toward the spot where, like a queen holding her court, stood the beautiful woman whose appearance was the sensation of the evening, surrounded by a group of men of the highest social and political rank?

The group fell back a little as Don Luis drew near and, addressing his wife, said, "Carmencita, I bring you an old friend."

There was no need to say more, nor, in truth, so much, for no sooner had her eyes fallen upon Ingraham than there came into them a great light of pleasure and kindness,—the kindness, absolutely unfeignable, of friendly recollection. She made a quick movement forward, and Ingraham forgot the Marquésa in the charm which emanated from herself,—such a gracious and noble charm of manner and speech as only a few women possess.

"Don Rafael!" she cried, using the old name with an inflection of delight in her voice. "*Que felicidad!* It gladdens me much to see you, señor. We did not know you were in Mexico."

"It is but to-day that I am arrived, señora," Ingraham repeated, bowing over her hand, with a consciousness of relief. It was more than he had expected to be so frankly and cordially met and placed at once upon the unquestioned footing of an old friend, for it had not been merely an excuse when he said to Rivera that she might not care to meet again one who had known her in former obscurity, and, he might have added, to whom she owed her changed position. It is, unfortunately, not necessary to be a misanthrope in order to be aware that the last persons whom prosperity generally desires to see are the witnesses of past adversity; and this Ingraham felt might be peculiarly so in his case, since there was no claim of ancient acquaintance or friendship to lessen the remembrance of his association with the transformation period of her life. That any self-reproach for the part she had acted might add to this possible reluctance to meet him, he did not, however, for a moment imagine. He too thoroughly appreciated the fact that no such sentiment had ever entered or could possibly enter her mind. She had never comprehended that she stood in any attitude toward him that called for excuse or self-reproach. This he knew well, and, knowing it, entertained no sense of injury for what he had long since clearly recognized as an inevitable result. But whether Cármen, wife of Don Luis, lady of Las Cruces, and reigning beauty, would care to meet the painter who had first seen beneath her humble *rebozo* the likeness which made her what she now was, he had conceived to be very doubtful, until the spontaneous warmth of her welcome set all doubts at rest. No; there was no petty desire to forget and ignore the past here, no turning away from the sense of obligation, but rather a quick acknowledgment which spoke eloquently of a nature at once noble and sweet.

These were the thoughts passing through his mind and justifying him in his past judgment of this woman, while he said a few words in explanation of his presence in Mexico, and then drew back that Brooke and Rivera might be presented by Don Luis. And, watching Cármen as she received them, he was forcibly struck by her manner, which could have been no more full of fine self-possession, of a stateliness a little grave perhaps for one so young, but perfect nevertheless, had she been indeed that Marquésa whom Velasquez painted, and who bore in her veins some of the proudest blood in Spain. A sudden recollection of Don Gilberto crossed Ingraham's mind, just as a young lady flushed by dancing into singularly animated loveliness came up on her partner's arm.

"Ah, Inésita," said Don Luis, turning to her, "there is no need to ask if you are enjoying the evening. But you come in time to meet one of whom you have often heard us speak. This is Señor Ingraham, —or Don Rafael, as we knew him at Las Cruces,—with whom thy father is well acquainted.—And this, Señor Ingraham, is my sister-in-law, the Señorita Doña Inés Rosa."

As Ingraham bowed in acknowledgment of the introduction, he

said to himself that it was no wonder the thought of Don Gilberto had come into his mind even before he was conscious that his eyes had fallen upon this girl who was so much like him. But the likeness did not prevent the señorita from being enchantingly pretty. It was a prettiness that contained no trace of resemblance to her sister's splendid beauty, but which possessed a quality of seductiveness peculiar to itself, and a picturesqueness as great as that of a gypsy. Her slightly parted lips of vivid scarlet showed pearl-white teeth, the flush on her cheeks was like the tint of the pomegranate, her dark eyes were shining with pleasure under their sweeping lashes and beneath the perfectly pencilled brows, while her dark, clustering, curling hair gave her small head the look of a Psyche. In fact, there was something Psyche-like about her altogether, a childlike joyousness, an air of absolute irrepressibility, which made Ingraham, whose perceptions and instincts often surprised himself by their keenness, think, "Here is a creature the sole end and aim of whose life is pleasure, and who to secure what she desires at the moment would without hesitation, although also without malice, sacrifice her best friend."

Such natures, however, possess an attraction which graver and more serious characters, weighted with the moral sense in which they are deficient, often lack, and Ingraham could not fail to perceive this charm, this indefinable seductiveness, in Inés, as she lifted her eyes, brimming with light, to his.

"I have often heard of you, señor," she said. "Carmencita and my papa have both talked much of you. I am very glad to see you at last."

"I reciprocate the sentiment, señorita," replied Ingraham, smiling. "But there is the difference that while your satisfaction in seeing me is, I fear, only a question of gratified curiosity, it could never be other than a pleasure under any circumstances to see you."

"You surprise me, señor!" she cried, lifting her dark, perfect brows. "I did not imagine that *los Americanos* ever said things like that,—pleasant, graceful things that one likes to hear whether they are exactly true or not. My papa is an *Americano*, as you are aware, and I have always understood from him that his countrymen are—how is it you say?—very literal, very exact, ready to swear to every word they utter."

"Your papa, señorita, is too complimentary to his countrymen," answered Ingraham. "Some of them are, I regret to say, by no means so scrupulously exact in their sentiments. But how is my old friend Don Gilberto?"

"Very well, señor, *muchas gracias*. After your going," she continued, lowering her voice a little, "we had much good luck. Besides Carmencita's marriage, papa sold the mine of La Luz, of which no doubt you heard him talk, for a great deal of money. He has often said that it was you who brought him the good fortune."

"That was very kind of him," said Ingraham, a little dryly, "and somewhat unlike the usual way of the world, which is to quickly forget the bringers of good fortune; although I cannot flatter myself that I had in reality anything to do with Don Gilberto's luck. But I have

a friend here, another truth-telling *Americano*, who I perceive desires much to be presented to you, if you will allow me——”

Brooke was indeed making telegraphic signals to that effect, *Cármen's* attention being just then absorbed by *Rivera*, and the appearance of *Inés* having at once attracted the young man's appreciative eye. That young lady according gracious permission, the introduction was duly made, the usual request for a dance was followed by some consultation of a ball-book, and then the two figures vanished in the throng, leaving *Ingraham* to turn again toward *Cármen*.

The movement proved to be favorable. *Rivera* was in the act of bowing himself away, in order to fulfil an engagement, the other members of the group lately surrounding her had for the present disappeared, and *Ingraham*, seeing his opportunity, grasped it with promptitude. Glancing around, he perceived in a recess at a little distance a vacant seat, partially sheltered by broad-leaved plants, and, offering his arm, begged permission to conduct her to it.

“For I think,” he said, with a composure which surprised himself, “that I may claim the privilege of an old friend to inquire somewhat at leisure how life has gone with you since we parted.”

She took his arm without hesitation. “It will give me pleasure to tell you anything you wish to know,” she answered, with the same air of fully recognizing his claim upon her friendship with which she had greeted him. “A few minutes of quiet will be pleasant, and this place is not so secluded that *Inés* cannot find me.”

“The appearance of your sister surprised me,” he said, as they sat down. “I don't know why it should, except that, having never seen any of your family, I have always thought of you as a being apart from such ties.”

“As simply a re-embodiment of the *Marquésa*?” she asked, with a quickly flashing smile. But, although she smiled, it was evident that the words were not altogether a jest with her. “We were many at home,” she added: “that was why you found me at *Las Cruces*. And *Inés* was the favorite of mamma,—she was so bright and pretty, and I so quiet always.”

“The sisters of *Cinderella* are not the only persons in human history who have occasionally been surprised by the recognition of modest merit,” observed *Ingraham*, with a certain sense of amusement in the thought of what the surprise of *Doña Joséfa Valdez* must have been when the child she had fancied only fit to be drudge and dependant at *Las Cruces* achieved such unexpected elevation.

“Tell me,” he continued, suddenly, yielding to an irresistible impulse to use this opportunity to satisfy in some degree at least the curiosity which tormented him concerning her, “has your life since your marriage been happy? I am not speaking of *Don Luis*, nor with reference to him, but of others. It was a hard position: have you conquered it?”

She looked at him, and he could not but think that in the depths of her splendid eyes there dwelt a power to conquer anything.

“I understand what you mean,” she replied, quietly, “but I had no difficulty: all was easy. No doubt you think this strange, and I

suppose it was strange that those who had known me as little more than a servant—merely Carmencita, so insignificant and so humble—should have yielded me respect and submitted to my authority when I was made the mistress of Las Cruces. I can only tell you that it was so."

"I think I comprehend why it was so," said Ingraham. "There are others besides those who sit on thrones born to rule by right divine. *You* were born with a fitness so peculiar for the position into which you stepped, that no one could fail to recognize it. It has not needed what I have seen to-night to tell me that others besides those at Las Cruces have recognized that the homage and power you once instinctively craved, and the longing for which was an impulse and demand of your nature that you could not stifle, are yours in fullest degree. Have they satisfied you?"

"What is it to be satisfied, señor?" she inquired, in turn, with the same calmness she had already displayed. "I have not asked myself the question. These things of which you speak—homage, consideration, flattery—have come to me as natural consequences of my position. They have seemed as much a part of my life as the air I breathe, and I give them no more thought. But if they were withdrawn I cannot doubt that I should miss them; for it is impossible to deny that homage pleases, and that the sense of power is sweet."

For a moment Ingraham did not reply, so much was he surprised by the candor of her speech, and the glimpse she so unhesitatingly afforded him of a nature which seemed to him hardly less interesting under these changed circumstances than it had seemed when first revealed to him in the old days at Las Cruces. An impulse to probe the depths of this character which retained in the midst of the world, as in the cloister-like seclusion of her youth, its singular unlikeness to others, stirred strongly within him, a desire to learn more of how the change in her outward life had affected that inner life which in the former time had been so unsuspected by those among whom she lived.

"It is more than I could have hoped," he said, at length, "that you would be so frank with me. Your kindness encourages me to ask yet another question."

"Ask what you will," she said, again. "Do you think I ever forget that but for you I should still be what you found me? Nothing that I could do would be too great to repay what I owe to you. And why should I not speak to you frankly,—you, who alone understand things which I would despair of making any one else comprehend?"

"It is of these things I wish to speak," replied Ingraham. "But let me say first that you owe me nothing for the part I played in the past. Was it merit of mine that I had eyes where others were blind? But because I possessed your confidence then, and because I do not think I am unworthy of it now, I venture to ask how much of your old feeling or fancy about the *Marquesa* still survives."

She looked at him for an instant in silence, not as if hesitating or doubtful, but only as if considering how to make her reply most clear. And again the startling likeness which she bore to the picture struck upon his senses with a perception so vivid that he was prepared for her answer when it came.

"Since you have asked the question, señor," she said, "I will tell you all with absolute frankness. Since the day that I became the wife of Don Luis, it is as if *Cármen Rosa* died, and my thoughts and feelings have been those of the *Marquésa* rather than of myself. By which I mean—for I fear that I express myself obscurely—those which would be natural for the *Marquésa* instead of for the *Cármen* that you knew. There has no longer been any sense of struggle between what I appeared and what I felt. All has been natural and easy. And indeed how else is it possible to explain that I have never for a day or an hour been at fault in a position which might naturally have been supposed to be so strange to me?—that I have never failed to know instinctively how to act and what to say in any emergency of my new life?"

"It was because your nature—by what mystery of inheritance transmitted to you, God only knows—fitted you for your new life as for a thing in perfect harmony," Ingraham answered. "Who could look at you and wonder that you should not be at fault in it? You are——"

Here he paused. How could he speak of that deepened likeness to the portrait of the woman whose image, he perceived, still retained such power over *Cármen's* imagination,—a likeness that had always seemed to him fraught with a suggestion of prophecy of misfortune? If no one else had perceived it,—and it was not likely that any one else had,—why should he, with his unerring artist eye, again call attention to what others had no power to see? He resolved that he would not do so; and it was in this brief pause—filled by the cadenced rise and fall of the music, and accented by the swaying, circling forms of the dancing throng before them—that he was conscious of a sensation as if he had been brought over land and sea to take up again the broken thread of the story which he had fancied dropped forever in the twilight at Las Cruces. This, he said to himself afterward, was no doubt because their conversation had reverted to the old topic, so full of mystery and fascination; for what part could he have yet to play in the existence of this woman who so explicitly declared that all her longings and desires were rounded into complete harmony with her life? But it was easier to ask this question afterward than to resist the strong impression borne to him as he sat by her side,—for the moment as much alone in the brilliant ball-room as in the quiet garden of Las Cruces,—the impression which made him say what his cooler sense later condemned as melodramatic and absurd.

"You spoke a moment ago," he said, hurriedly,—for he caught a glimpse of *Brooke's* tall head above the crowd, and feared he was seeking them,—“of owing me a debt of gratitude because from my visit to Las Cruces, from my seeing what those around you were too blind to perceive, the great change in your destiny has resulted. I repeat again that for this you owe me nothing, since in all the matter I was but an instrument of fate; and I hope that your life may be too happy for you ever to regret the change which, nevertheless, but for me might never have been wrought. Yet if a time should come when you should regret this change and need—who knows!—a friend or de-

fender, then remember that you have a right to call upon one who, however unwittingly, altered the whole course of your life,—to ask of me any service which a man may render. Will you remember this?"

She regarded him now with wonder, untouched, however, by any shade of displeasure, as if she, too, felt that the strange past gave him a right to speak so of the unknown future.

"Señor," she said, gravely, "I will remember it if you desire, as a proof of your kindness and readiness to serve me. But I can think of nothing less likely than that I shall ever call upon you. While my husband lives I have no need of other friend or defender."

"That may be so," he answered, "and God grant it! But should any need in which another man may have power to serve you spring out of the great change wrought through me, then remember that it is my right to be that man. Now forgive me for having startled you by speaking of these things—and here comes your sister."

IV.

It was as they sat over their late breakfast the next morning, discussing the events of the ball, that Brooke expressed himself enthusiastically with regard to Inés.

"Not to be mentioned in comparison with her sister!" he said, repeating Ingraham's somewhat scornful words. "Perhaps not. But it is the grand style, that of the sister,—stately, superb, marvellously beautiful, a picture stepped into life, a great lady of the past revived, a princess, if you will, made to be worshipped from afar, while that of Doña Inés is enchanting, sparkling, seductive. The mingling of blood—for she tells me that her father is an American—is very evident in her. She has all the alluring charm of the Mexican beauty, with the quick intelligence and frankness of manner of an American girl, which makes a delightful combination."

"H'm!" said Ingraham. "However delightful it may be, I am not sure of the desirableness of the combination. Doña Inés will soon be regarded very much askance if she displays any American frankness of manner in Mexico."

"So she says. She told me that her liking for American manners, and her disposition to practise them, had already brought disagreeable criticism upon her. She admires the freedom which women enjoy in our country, and declares that her dream is some day to go and live in the States."

"She has been very confidential, it appears," said Ingraham. "My dear fellow, it would be absurd for me to assume the rôle of Mentor, but you must allow me to observe that the woman who chafes against social restraints in one country would hardly find any country in which they were lax enough to satisfy her,—not even the most socially primitive regions of our highly favored land."

"But, by Jove! it is hard on a girl with any ideas of liberty to be bound hand and foot as they are here!" exclaimed Brooke, feelingly. "I never thought of it until Doña Inés was talking."

"And then you were fired with the spirit of a knight-errant to rescue the imprisoned damsel! Bah! Don't you understand that, with the unfailing instinct of a coquette, Doña Inés was talking simply with a view to arouse your interest? I doubt if she has ever thought of chafing against the social restraints which she has known since she was born, and which here, as in Europe, are relaxed only among the lower orders. The last thing she would really desire would be to sink to the level of those for whom such restraints are not considered necessary; and the daughters of Don Gilberto Rosa, in time past at least, have been near enough to that level to cling eagerly and tenaciously to the restraints imposed on those of higher social rank. Therefore, with due regard to her charming seductiveness, I find the complaints of Doña Inés somewhat insincere."

"But who is this father of hers?" asked Brooke, curiously. "'Don Gilberto Rosa' does not sound very like an American name."

"Are you not aware that foreigners residing in this country generally use the Spanish form for a part at least of their names? John Jones, for example, ceases to be John and becomes Juan Jones, familiarly and picturesquely known as Don Juan. So Gilberto Rosa stands for Gilbert Rose, in plain English."

"Gilbert Rose! That means nothing," said Brooke, while Ingraham reflected how very much it did mean. "Who is the man? An adventurer?"

"As an American, somewhat on that order, I imagine," replied Ingraham, carelessly. "But as a Mexican he has made a position for himself as a clever man of affairs, and, being now closely connected with Don Luis Fernandez del Valle, he has no doubt a successful career within his reach. A person of very shrewd wits is Don Gilberto, and not likely to let any chance of fortune escape him."

"I fancy I know the kind of man," said Brooke. "But it is rather a singular type to have produced such an imperial creature as the beautiful wife of your Don Luis."

"If I told you what I not only believe but know of Carmen Rosa, of how she is the strange revival in every possible point of an ancestress dead two hundred years ago," said Ingraham, quietly, "you would probably believe me to be the victim of a delusion. But it is nevertheless true. There is in the old hacienda of Las Cruces a portrait painted by Velasquez of a certain Marquésa de Fernandez del Valle which would readily pass for a portrait of Doña Carmen as she now appears. When I saw her first the likeness was so far undeveloped that I was the first to discover it; but now the blindest person would perceive it."

"I have no difficulty in believing it," said Brooke, "for I perceived at once that she is in singular degree the revival of a type which one seldom sees except in such portraits. It is an interesting question, which I suppose you have no power of answering, how far her inward character corresponds to her outward appearance and is also a revival of the dead ancestress."

The question was as natural as it was lightly asked; but even the speaker saw that Ingraham shrank from it.

"How can one tell? Who could answer that?" he said, somewhat sharply. "Such speculation is absurd. But to return to the point from which we wandered, this strange re-embodiment in a degree accounts for the fact that such a creature can be the daughter of Don Gilberto. But there is no explanation necessary for the second daughter. She is thoroughly in harmony with her immediate surroundings. There is no mystery of distant inheritance about her. She is what one would naturally look for in the child of such a marriage,—that of a Mexican woman possessing no doubt the beauty of her Latin-Indian race, and an American of sharp wits and some pretension to good blood. But it is not a very elevated type."

"I fail to perceive that," replied Brooke, somewhat obstinately. "You let your imagination carry you too far, Ingraham. It is impossible to declare exactly what people may be from a study of their progenitors, either near or remote."

"Perhaps not," Ingraham agreed, "yet I have seldom found myself mistaken in these impressions. I cannot, however, blame you for distrusting my unlucky imagination, which I have been distrusting myself for some time past,—only to find at last that it has not been in fault. Now," as they rose from table, "where shall we go? Have you any plan for this morning?"

"None, except an appointment with Rivera, who proposes to introduce me at his club. For the rest—you are familiar with Mexican social customs; is there any reason why we should not call at the Fernandez del Valle, to ask how the ladies are after the ball, you know?"

"So far from there being any reason why we should not," Ingraham replied, "it is a duty incumbent upon me at least, who am indebted to Don Luis for hospitality in time past. I must call this afternoon, and you can accompany me if you like."

"I have received more cordial invitations," returned Brooke, lightly, "but, since I accept on the ground of my own inclination rather than your cordiality, you may count upon me."

"This is a habitation worthy of your revived Marquésa, Ingraham," Brooke exclaimed when they found themselves a few hours later before the immense carved door-way of the Fernandez del Valle house. "In Spain or in Italy it would be called a palace."

"It is very fine," Ingraham agreed, as, stepping within the open door, where the porter rose from his seat to receive them, he cast a rapid glance over the stately spaciousness of the noble building. It was plainly one of the great old houses of the Colonial period, of which many still remain in the city of Mexico, and which seem built to defy time, as they stand with their massive walls, their vast courts, and their rich carvings in stone, while the wrought iron and quaint tile-work with which they are adorned make them objects to delight an artist's heart. A perfect example of such an ancient magnificent house is that once owned by the Condes de Santiago near the Hospital de Jesús, and such another was this of the Fernandez del Valle. Long unoccupied by the family during their reverses of fortune, a little work

in the interior had nevertheless been all that was necessary to remove the disfiguring traces of time, and a little modern furnishing to convert the mediæval abode into a dwelling fit for the occupation of a prince.

To an inquiry if the señor and señora were at home, the porter replied in the affirmative, and, advancing to the foot of a staircase which mounted upward in superb flight, pulled a bell-cord, and then, with a courteous gesture, invited the visitors to ascend. Mounting the wide marble steps, they were met at the head by a servant, who, receiving their cards, ushered them along a tile-paved corridor lined with beautiful plants into a reception-room, from which opened by large double doors a vast and lofty *sala*.

Had anything besides his presence in Mexico been necessary to assure Ingraham that a great change had taken place in the circumstances of Don Luis, the appearance of the apartment which they now entered would have so assured him. It was furnished with a modern luxury as bright and attractive as the Paris of which it breathed, that was strangely in contrast with the ancient massive dwelling.

"This is charming!" said Brooke, casting an appreciative glance over the satin couches, the light, gilded chairs, the whole aspect of delicate luxuriousness. "I fancied that within such venerable walls we should find nothing of later date than the sixteenth century. But this is very effective,—a *fin de siècle* boudoir in a mediæval palace."

Ingraham frowned slightly. The modern touch which pleased the other offended him. He thought of the *sala* of Las Cruces, with its old Spanish leather and inlaid wood and the picture worthy of a king's palace. There all was harmonious, with an antique charm like the breath of another world. But here—the contrast might be effective, yet it jarred upon his imaginations of *Cármen*, all of which had for their setting the ancient picturesqueness and almost monastic simplicity of the surroundings amid which he had seen her first.

He had, however, no opportunity to express this dissatisfaction, for scarcely had the servant left the room when Don Luis entered, with that cordial air of hospitality which a Mexican seldom fails to display beneath his own roof.

"It gladdens me much to see you, *mi amigo*," he said, patting Ingraham lightly on the back. "And your friend, Señor Brooke—I am delighted to welcome you into my house, señor, and beg that you will consider it your own."

"We have done ourselves the honor of calling to pay our respects and inquire if the ladies have entirely recovered from the fatigue of the ball last night," said Ingraham. "It was a very brilliant affair, but the crowd was excessive."

"Ah, what will you?" said Don Luis, lifting his shoulders. "Official balls must of necessity be crowded and in a degree indiscriminate. I was present only as a matter of courtesy; but my wife and her sister, I think, enjoyed it. Here they are, however, to answer for themselves."

They entered as he spoke,—*Cármen* in advance, with the unconscious majesty of bearing which distinguished her, and which made Ingraham think of a queen attended by her maid of honor, as his

glance fell upon Inés following her. For, notwithstanding a family resemblance between the sisters in the height of their figures and certain similar lines and movements, it would be difficult to conceive anything more unlike than the lofty beauty of the one, with its stamp of noble simplicity, and the seductive prettiness of the other, pervaded by a coquetry which spoke in every glance and gesture. *Cármen* seemed more than ever like the portrait as she moved forward with a grace so stately, a loveliness so surpassing; and the perception of this, which was strongly in *Ingraham's* mind, must have been more evident on his face than he supposed, for no sooner were the salutations of greeting over than *Don Luis* addressed him.

"Taking for granted, señor, your recollection of the *Velasquez* portrait at *Las Cruces*," he said, "may I ask if you find the resemblance of *Dofia Cármen* to it, which you once thought so wonderful, lessened or increased?"

The question surprised *Ingraham* too much for him to think of evasion. In fact, his resolution of the night before had escaped his recollection, so fanciful to the calmer sense of daylight appeared the need for the reticence he had determined to observe.

"It has increased," he replied, without an instant's hesitation, the artist uppermost in him for the moment, and his natural frankness asserting itself in the old artistic fashion. "If it was striking as I recognized it first, when the unlikeness was almost as great as the likeness, it is much more striking now, when, instead of an unformed girl, *Dofia Cármen* has become a woman such as the *Marquésa* was when *Velasquez* painted her."

He spoke with the manner of one who utters his thoughts aloud, but an instant later he was startled into a sense of what he had done by perceiving the effect of his words upon *Don Luis*. The latter, turning, looked at his wife with the same expression of being waked to a new perception as that with which he had regarded the portrait when *Ingraham* first called his attention to the strange likeness that *Cármen* bore to it. As if roused to a new knowledge, great as that, he now gazed at her with a keen and piercing look,—the look of one who perceives a fact hitherto concealed from observation, but clearly patent when once attention is roused. It was only for an instant that this look lasted. Then he said, slowly,—

"It is singular, señor, how your mission seems to be to open our eyes to things which we are too dull to see without your aid. You are right again. The likeness which *Cármen* bears to the portrait of the *Marquésa* has developed with her own development, until it is indeed much greater now than when you first discovered it at *Las Cruces*."

"Nothing could be more natural," replied *Ingraham*, anxious to retrieve the blunder he had committed. For how was it possible, he said to himself, that *Don Luis* should not think, even as he had thought, of the story of the *Marquésa*, should not shrink from the suggestions roused by *Cármen's* deepened likeness to that portrait, where the skill of the great painter had fixed so enduringly the potent spell of the original that he had himself been constrained to cry out, in words that

recurred to him like a prophecy of ill, "It was no wonder that tragedy centred about her. Such a woman was born to make tragedies."

And such a woman, perfect in every point of reproduction, even to the lips lightly touched with disdain of the homage her beauty excited, and dark splendid eyes filled with depths of possible passion, was before them. Ingraham felt himself shiver a little, even as he had shivered on that by-gone day when he first saw the picture of Las Cruces. Yet it was in vehement contradiction of the thought that any such tragedy as that of the Marquésa could touch this noble lady, with her air of proud spotlessness, that he eagerly went on:

"It would not be natural that a likeness so strong should not increase with time, up to the point in life where the process of development in the Marquésa was fixed by Velasquez in the immortality of art upon his canvas. But beyond that point there will be a growing difference, as there was a lessening difference before."

"To the portrait, yes," said Don Luis, thoughtfully, "but not, we may suppose, to the original of the portrait."

"That," replied Ingraham, "it is, of course, impossible to determine."

"One may draw the inference," said the other. "Meanwhile, it is quite certain that up to this point the likeness has increased, and that Doña Carmen is in greater degree than when you last saw her a reproduction of the portrait."

"There can be no doubt of that," said Ingraham, with an inward reluctance which rendered the words difficult to utter.

But Don Luis looked at his wife with a smile. "Carmen, at least, will not find fault with you for declaring that her beauty has increased," he said. "For that, after all, is the result of the deepened resemblance."

"If Doña Carmen will pardon me," replied Ingraham, "I should say that, like the resemblance, such a result is so plain as to be undeniable."

Carmen met his gaze with no more trace of embarrassment than if she had been the portrait of which they talked. "If it is so, señor," she answered, "it is, no doubt, as you have said, a natural result."

Meanwhile Brooke was saying to Inés, "You know, of course, this odd portrait of which my friend has talked to me. Do you perceive the striking resemblance which your sister is supposed to bear to it?"

"Oh, yes," she replied. "It would not be possible not to recognize it. When one looks at the portrait and then at Carmencita, it is as if the Marquésa had come to life before one's eyes; every one is astonished by it; and yet no one had ever observed it before the Señor Ingraham went to Las Cruces."

"He did not tell me that," said Brooke. "But artists have keen eyes, you know, and often detect resemblances that other people fail to see. Ingraham is a true artist,—there is not the least doubt of that; although he does not make a profession of his art."

"You mean that he does not paint pictures for money?" asked Inés. "So I have heard my papa say. Indeed, if that were the case, he could not afford to cut them up as soon as he had finished them."

"Is it a habit of his to do that? I was not aware of it," said Brooke, laughing. "It seems rather an unnecessary proceeding, from every point of view."

"A habit? I do not know if it is a habit with him," the young lady replied, arching her slender dark eyebrows and showing her pearly teeth in a laugh that echoed his own. "But he did it once. It was a portrait of Carmencita—and most wonderful, all who saw it say. But he cut it to pieces when he found she was to marry Don Luis. My papa told us that also. He said it was a great pity, and he was sorry that Señor Ingraham felt the matter so much, but of course there could be no doubt that Don Luis was the person for Carmencita to marry."

"Why of course?" asked Brooke, in a discreet tone. He found this frank young lady quite entertaining, and had no scruples of conscience in thus surprising Ingraham's secret. In fact, he rather enjoyed doing so, for in the light of this revelation everything became clear to him, and he felt that he touched one of those dramas of life which are so often enacted before our eyes without our being the wiser.

Inés opened her dark eyes wider and arched her brows again at the question; her play of countenance was perpetual, but never degenerated into grimacing. "Do you ask me, why of course?" she repeated. "It is strange that you do not see. To marry Don Luis was a great match for Carmencita, and it has helped us all—oh, more than you can understand! For we were quite obscure people before,—papa being an *Americano*, you know,—and very poor, although he was always expecting to be rich. But since Carmencita has married Don Luis everything has changed for us, and therefore I say it was better for Señor Ingraham to cut up his picture and go away."

"There is certainly no doubt how the matter appears from your point of view," said Brooke. "And the señora your sister,—I may say Doña Carmen, may I not?—I suppose she also thought it best that Ingraham should cut up his picture and go away?"

Inés spread out her hands with a gesture which expressed much. "How was it possible for her to think anything else?" she asked. "If she had gone away with Señor Ingraham, and he is as rich as my papa says, it might have been well with *her* perhaps, but *we* should have been there in Morelia yet, poor and obscure. I like it better here in Mexico, with Don Luis as the Senator from Michoacan. And so does Carmencita, I am sure."

"What a selfish little wretch it is!" thought Brooke to himself, but in a spirit of more amusement than condemnation. The very candor of the selfishness disarmed criticism; the assumption that Carmen owed it to her family to marry Don Luis, even if her own fancy had been drawn toward the lover whose passion expressed itself by cutting her picture into shreds, was, he knew, in social conditions such as existed here, the natural opinion, and he had lived too much in European countries to find the calmly mercenary tone of Inés regarding her sister's marriage—and, it was to be supposed, regarding marriage in general—as revolting as an American of a more primitive type might have found it. But he thought it time to give the conversation a more personal tone.

"I perceive," he said, "that we poor *Americanos* have little chance to win your favor, señorita. You have no pity for my poor friend in his disappointment, and I fear you would have as little for any one of his countrymen who should be unlucky enough to follow his example and lose his heart to a pair of Mexican eyes."

The eyes in question—into which he boldly looked with a gaze of admiration—met his own with a swift, alluring challenge impossible to mistake, and then the silken-fringed lids drooped demurely over them.

"On the contrary, señor," she replied, "I have, as I told you last night, a very great partiality for *Americanos*. Is not my papa one of them?—and of all his children I am most like him. I like American customs, and I am sure I should like the American country, where I am told that girls are as free as widows; but what will you?—I am a Mexican, and since it is necessary for me to live among Mexicans I must be content to do as they do."

"Some gallant *Americano* will one day, perhaps, come and offer to rescue you and carry you off to the land of liberty to which you allude," said Brooke; "and then—will you then follow your sister's example, choose the Don Luis of the story, and leave the other to perform the equivalent of cutting up your picture?"

"Ah, señor,"—what boundless innocence of voice, and what a very devil of coquetry in the brilliant glance under the dark lashes!—"it is not possible for me to answer that until the *Americano* shall present himself. For there are many different kinds of *Americanos*. So much I know."

"What is it that you know, Inésita?" asked Don Luis, turning around to take part in the conversation. "Not much outside of the school-room, *carita*, fast as thy tongue goes."

"I was telling the señor what I know only because I have learned it from my papa," the girl answered, demurely, "that there are many different kinds of *Americanos*."

"The señor hardly needs for you to tell him that," said Don Luis, with a smile, as he looked at Brooke. "There are many different kinds of people in all countries; but truly it seems to me, if I may be permitted to say so, señor, that there is no country where so wide a gulf seems to exist between the best and the—others, as in your own."

"The others, as you politely term them," said Brooke, laughing, "have, unfortunately, so largely represented their country in Mexico that I wonder you have discovered the existence of any other kind of Americans. But there *are* a few of us who must beg to be judged as individuals, and not as belonging to a class which has made itself so deservedly obnoxious to your countrymen."

"There can certainly be no doubt to what class Señor Brooke belongs," replied Don Luis, courteously

It was during the opportunity thus afforded that Ingraham said in a low tone to Carmen, "I hope that you will pardon me for having forgotten so far as to fall into my old habit of personal remarks. For an instant I failed to remember that you are no longer the Carmen of Las Cruces."

"On the contrary, señor," she answered, with the proud yet gentle

dignity which had so often surprised him in the girl and now sat so well upon the woman, "I am now more than ever in a true sense *Cármen* of Las Cruces. For Las Cruces is my home, where I have been very happy, where it seems to me that there is a something of justice—a righting of wrong, if I may so express myself—in the fact that I am honored as mistress where the woman whom you tell me that I am so like died a misjudged and unhappy prisoner."

"Why should you believe that she was misjudged?" Ingraham could not refrain from asking. "You cannot have had any new light upon the family tradition."

"Only the light of what is within myself," she answered, with great positiveness. "But this tells me that, however much appearances may have been against her,—and one does not need to be very old or very wise, señor, to know how deceptive appearances can be,—she was too proud and too lofty ever to have stooped to stain her dignity and her soul with the crime imputed to her. I would stake my own soul upon that."

"It may have been so," said Ingraham, deeply struck by her earnestness. "Who can tell? She may have been suspected and judged unjustly, and, if so, Heaven has raised up for her a champion such as never woman had before, a descendant who, centuries after her beauty has mouldered into dust, declares her innocence from lips that are a re-incarnation of her own."

She looked at him with the beautiful lips of which he spoke faintly smiling. "You are as fanciful as I am, señor," she said. "And there have been times when even you have thought me almost mad upon this point. Yet nothing will ever persuade me that I do not know that of which I speak. But now I see yonder my little Alfonso. You must let me call him and show him to you."

A child passing with his nurse along the corridor outside was summoned within,—a bold, beautiful little fellow with large dark eyes and golden curls. After he had been noticed and admired, the two visitors rose to take leave, since an impatient stamp of horses' feet, recurring now and again, warned them that the carriage was no doubt waiting for the ladies to take their afternoon drive.

But as Ingraham left the great old house and walked away, two things remained with him: one was the picture which *Cármen* made with her beautiful boy in her arms, and the other the positiveness with which she had declared from her own inner consciousness and belief that the *Marquesa* had been unjustly judged.

V.

"*Inésita*," said *Cármen*, "I do not think that it is well for you to encourage the young *Americano* who is the friend of Señor Ingraham to make love to you."

"And why not?" asked *Inés*, a little mockingly. "Why should he not 'play the bear' a little in his own fashion? It will not hurt him, and it amuses me. Perhaps it is because I am American, too, in right

of our papa, that I find him more amusing than any Mexican whom I know."

"But it will not amuse him," said *Cármen*, gently, "when he learns that he has been fooled. It is a heartless game, *Inésita*, and one which you should not play."

"Is it more heartless than that which you played with the *Señor Ingraham* when through him you won *Don Luis*?" asked *Inés*, tossing her dark, graceful head. "Do you think I have not heard of that, and how he cut to pieces the picture he had painted of you?"

"You mistake what you have heard," replied *Carmen*, grown cold and stately of a sudden. "I never deceived *Señor Ingraham*,—not for a moment,—nor thought of winning *Don Luis* through him. Because—and I grieve to say it, *Inésita*—your own thoughts are low, you think that those of every one else must be so. But if good feeling will not restrain you, I warn you not to encourage this young American, because in that case I shall have to send you back to *Morelia*."

"And why?" asked *Inés*, defiantly. "What is this young American more than any one else, that you should consider him? Is it because you have a tenderness for *all* Americans?"

The girl's insolence fell unheeded on her sister's dignity and coldness. "It is," she answered, quietly, "because I promised papa that no entanglement with any American should follow your coming here. 'I will not permit anything of that kind,' he said. 'If *Inésita* shows the least disposition to encourage an American,—of whom there are many to be met now, even in society, in Mexico,—tell her what I have said; and if she does not obey the warning, send her home at once.' I promised him that I would do so; and that promise, if you do not heed what I have said, I shall certainly keep."

Inés looked at the speaker for a moment as if almost doubting the evidence of her senses. Although the youngest, she had in their childhood reigned supreme over *Cármen* by right of her mother's partiality, her supposed greater beauty, and her faculty of self-assertion. The relative position had naturally changed since *Cármen's* marriage, but not enough to prepare her for this assumption of authority which could not be gainsaid. The time had come when she too felt, what the household of *Las Cruces* had long since learned, that if the *Marquésa* did not live again in *Cármen*, at least the *Marquésa* had possessed no more inherently than did *Cármen*, and as it were by right, the ability to rule those whom the fortunes of life placed under her control. It was the first time that *Inés* had come in conflict with that calm, superior will and felt the necessity of submission. For although it was easy enough to defy *Cármen* and refuse obedience with angry words, what then? *Cármen* had but to speak, and *Inés* would find herself back in *Morelia*, which she detested, since it was connected with the days of poverty and obscurity, since her associations there were with people whom she now scorned, and since it offered no such openings for her ambition as Mexico afforded. No, it would be too heavy a price to pay for the satisfaction of defiance, to be sent into such banishment. She recognized that instantly; but her anger was the greater for her impotence, and even as she determined that obedience should be only

in outward seeming, she also resolved that she would find some means of revenging herself on the sister who ventured to assert the right to control her actions.

"I do not understand," she said, with outward coldness but inward rage, "why papa should have spoken to you on such a subject instead of to me. Of course I am bound to respect *his* wishes, strange as they seem. Yet why should he dislike his own countrymen so much?"

"I did not ask him," Carmen replied.

She said nothing more, and for several minutes there was silence. The conversation had taken place during their drive in the Paseo a few days after the visit of Ingraham and Brooke,—a visit which the former had declined to repeat, but which the latter had found an excuse for repeating with Rivera. There had then been a meeting on Sunday in the Alameda, where the fashionable world displays itself in its gayest plumes, and this afternoon there had been enough coquetry in the manner in which Inés wafted toward him, as they passed in the drive, the pretty Mexican salutation of fluttering fingers, to call forth from Carmen the warning with which the conversation opened.

Nursing her wrath at what she considered a most unwarrantable interference with her private amusements, Inés, after the last words, leaned back in her corner of the carriage as they rolled smoothly along the wide roadway crowded with equipages, a line of mounted police in the centre dividing the two streams of vehicles and preserving perfect order. The sun had set; his last reflected glow vanished from the great snow-peaks in the east, and something of twilight began to reign in the foliaged spaces of the broad avenue, lined with gardens and villas. For it is the fashion in Mexico to prolong the afternoon drive until day is on the verge of melting into night, or has already so melted. Presently, like the rest of the world, they paused in the *glorieta*, a vast statue-adorned circle, where the band in its pavilion was playing the sweet Mexican airs which are so full of light grace and melody, and where a throng of carriages are always gathered. Dusk had now deepened, so that to recognize one's next neighbor was not very easy, and therefore, when a horseman drew up into the vacant space beside the carriage, only the person on the side where he appeared could readily determine his identity.

But it hardly needed the sound of Brooke's easy voice to make Inés quite sure who the new-comer was. "Shall one say *buenos dias* or *buenos noches*, señorita?" he asked. "It is a pretty custom, this of taking the Paseo at twilight: I always think of a carnival of fireflies, when I see the carriage-lamps gleaming all over the avenue; but mistakes are possible in the obscurity, and one might find one's self whispering one's secret in another ear than that for which it was intended."

"He who should be foolish enough to whisper any secret in the Paseo would deserve to find it public property, señor," replied the girl, with a melodious laugh. "There are other and safer places for the telling of secrets."

"No doubt," said Brooke,—and he would have been deaf to the language of tones had he not understood the subtle intimation conveyed in those words,—“but you must remember that a poor foreigner

does not always know where such places are to be found. As far as I can perceive, one might have a secret to tell which burned within him for utterance, and yet find no opportunity whatever to tell it."

"There are always opportunities for him who knows how to take them, señor," the low, significant tones replied. "It is only that, being a foreigner, as you have said, you do not know."

"But, since being a foreigner is my misfortune rather than my fault, have I not some claim upon your charity for instruction?" he asked, reining his horse closer to the side of the carriage. "I should be very grateful for a hint. I am not dull; no more than a hint would be necessary."

Inés gave a rapid glance around. The music was pealing its strains out upon the soft, color-stained twilight, horses were stamping, carriages coming and going; no word of this *l'été-à-tête* could possibly be heard, unless it were by *Cármen*. But *Cármen*, she perceived with satisfaction, had her attention engrossed by a horseman on the other side of the carriage,—Brooke's companion, who, of course, was *Ingraham*. A quick, venomous light came into the girl's eyes, and her scarlet lips curled into a smile which was anything but pleasant. "It is for me only that Americans are forbidden," she said to herself. "Well, we shall see."

She turned back toward Brooke. The words which she uttered were not very many. But he, as he had said, was not dull. Even under ordinary circumstances a word was enough for him, and now his interest was kindled by the novelty of this flirtation, by the touch of difficulty which gave zest to it. He did not for a moment mistake Inés, or regard her as anything more than what she was, a consummate coquette, who, as far as lay in her power, would break a man's heart for pastime. But there was nothing deterring to him in this knowledge. He had not the least intention of allowing her to break his heart, nor yet to lead him into any folly of taking her or the situation seriously. He knew well that in thus meeting his advances she betrayed the character of the social surroundings which had moulded her youth, and proved herself no high-bred maiden, but the daughter of an adventurer and of a mother who, springing herself from an obscure class of society, had taken pride in her daughter's coquettishness, even while keeping a very sharp eye on those flirtations through the window-bars which had perfected coquetry into an art. It was indeed well for *Cármen* that she had been left in the seclusion of *Las Cruces* and to *Doña Antonia's* somewhat severe rule, well that she had grown up in that stately if cold atmosphere, rather than that her mind and manners had been tarnished by the influences which had in great measure made Inés what she was. But, being what she was, she offered to Brooke an opportunity which he felt could not but prove extremely entertaining,—a flirtation with all the accompaniments which render love-making in Spanish lands so alluring to the romantic fancy.

Meanwhile, *Ingraham* on the other side of the carriage was saying to *Cármen*, "I am sorry to have been out when *Don Luis* did me the honor to call yesterday. But I hope to have the pleasure of seeing him again before I leave Mexico."

"Many times, I hope, señor," she answered, with the gracious cordiality that is second nature to Mexican man or woman. "Why do you forget that our house is yours, and that it would give us great pleasure to see you in it? There are few evenings when we have not friends with us, and many of these—men in public life—it might interest you to meet."

"Your house could never be other than interesting to me while it contained yourself and Don Luis," replied Ingraham. "But, since you include me in the number of the friends who are permitted to visit you informally, I shall be happy to present myself some evening."

"Could you possibly doubt that we included you among the friends whom we would be glad to see at any time?" she asked, with a slight accent of reproach. "I fear you do not remember the past as well as we do, señor."

This was a little exasperating to one who remembered the past much too well for his own comfort, and before Ingraham paused to recollect himself the feeling found expression in speech.

"On the contrary, señora," he replied, "I think that it is I who best remember Las Cruces and all that occurred there. If I remembered less well, I should perhaps be more ready to take advantage of your kindness."

The words were hardly spoken before he regretted them, and the regret was increased by the startled glance of surprise which she turned upon him. Again he observed how absolutely she was without the faintest conception of his having any ground for a sense of injury with regard to her treatment of him; and, seeing this as a man of coarse perceptions would not have seen it, the sense of injury itself died away, and he felt ashamed of the *brusquerie* of his speech.

"Forgive me," he added, quickly, before she could speak. "I should not have said that. My memory of Las Cruces and of you contains nothing which I would wish to change. To find your kindness undiminished is more than I could have expected. I am very sensible of it, and I shall certainly do myself the honor of calling, as you permit, very soon."

"The sooner the better," she replied, with a smile and a graceful inclination of the head, as he, bowing, drew his horse back and ended the conversation.

He was glad that Brooke was unusually silent as they rode slowly toward the city along the darkening avenue, with its now lessening throng of carriages and gleaming lamps. It was owing to the fact that they had been out on a day-long excursion to the *Desierto* that they were on horseback,—which is the custom for the morning rather than for the evening *Paseo*; but the chance had served each well. Brooke was still smiling over Inés's hint, while Ingraham, recalling the gentle cordiality of *Cármen's* manner, said to himself that the doubts and scruples which had kept him away from her were absurd. For was it not the cure he had appointed for his malady, and which had drawn him over land and sea in his return here, to see her in her new life, and so divest himself of the unreal fancies that still clung

about her image in his mind? Was it not essential to this end that he should regard her, not as the heroine of a story that had enthralled his imagination, not as the revived personality of the *Marquésa* transferred to another age and time, but as the wife of Don Luis and the mother of his children? It was by seeing her in this commonplace rôle that his best hope lay that the wild fancies which had clustered about *Cármen* of Las Cruces would die, and that, like a man released from some spell of sorcery, he would arise and go forth free,—free as he had not been since he first stood before the Velasquez portrait. Yet, overwhelmed, as it were, by recognition of the fact that his imagination had not deceived him in the depth of her likeness to that portrait, and oppressed by a fear that the strange spell of the past might revive and increase rather than lessen were he again subjected to her influence, he had, after their first necessary meetings, avoided her as if she had been a *Circe* of evil enchantment, rather than one whose eyes were full only of the light of ancient kindness, and before whose matchless dignity and purity any thought which did not do her honor would sink down abashed.

"Brooke," he said, abruptly, when, having left the Avenida, they were drawing near to their hotel, "should you like to pay a visit at the Fernandez del Valle to-night? Doña *Cármen* told me a few minutes ago that it is their custom to receive their friends in the evening, and I fancy they think we—or at least I—have rather neglected them."

"It is distinctly a case of 'I,' not 'we,'" replied Brooke. "They certainly do not think that I have neglected them. But I shall be very happy to accompany you to-night. It seems a tempting of Providence not to take advantage of such a social opportunity."

"It may rather be a tempting of fate to take advantage of it," said Ingraham, as if to himself. "But we will go."

VI.

Looking back afterward on this period of his stay in Mexico, it seemed to Ingraham as if for a time he had suffered all thoughts of the Velasquez picture and his forebodings connected with it, all memories of the *Marquésa*, all memories even of the *Cármen* he had known at Las Cruces, to pass away from him in his enjoyment of a social intercourse to which *Cármen's* words on the Paseo had been the introduction and key. When he went that evening with Brooke to the Fernandez del Valle house, they found what she had indicated,—nothing of the nature of a formal reception, but a group of three or four persons assembled in the small *sala*, pleasantly illuminated by shaded lamplight, where during the course of the evening several others dropped in. Evidently his old friends had gathered with cordiality around Don Luis, who, Ingraham perceived from the prevailing tenor of the conversation, was developing the qualities of a political leader, and his house had come to be known as a pleasant place to meet. Probably the rare beauty and distinguished manners of its young mistress had

something to do with this, although Ingraham also observed on the first evening, what struck him often afterward, that she made no effort whatever to claim or attract attention to herself.

Such efforts, however, were for such a woman unnecessary. To escape attention was for her impossible. Had she desired to do so, there would have been but one means of accomplishing it,—to withdraw altogether from society. But while there was no effort to attract, there was also no effort to escape. As she had told him, she took homage, consideration, flattery, as a matter of course. No princess born in the purple could have had more the air of one to whom these things were natural as the air she breathed, and whose vanity was no more roused by them than her composure was disturbed. Sometimes, like a picture in a dream, Ingraham had a vision of the girl he had once seen seated at her lowly tasks in a room bare as the aspect of her life, and, contrasting that humble maiden with the queenly woman who received with a dignity so perfect the admiration amid which she moved, he asked himself if anything short of magic could explain the transformation.

It was a question which others besides himself had asked. For it is hardly to be supposed that to the friends and relatives of Don Luis his marriage had appeared as anything save an act of supreme folly. They had shaken their heads and prophesied only evil of a union so ill judged and, from every point of view, so unequal. When, they asked, did a man of mature age who married a girl young, beautiful, inexperienced, and humbly born, fail to repent of his folly? There was great compassion expressed for Don Luis, great regret for a weakness which would surely entail upon him such deplorable consequences. But no one had any compassion to bestow upon Cármen, for whom the marriage was also, in a certain sense, unequal, and who might be supposed to be running some grave risks likewise. The discriminating eye of the public saw only the extraordinary elevation which had come to the daughter of Doña Joséfa and Don Gilberto. It was the story of King Cophetua over again, and who, in story or out of it, was ever known to entertain compassion for the beggar-maid?

But as time went on, it began to appear, even to these critics, as if their compassion had been wasted, as if the marriage, unequal though it seemed with respect to age and social position, was not so unequal in reality. People who had gone to Las Cruces filled with curiosity, expecting to see a girl without presence or manners, although with a pretty face no doubt, went away confounded with astonishment, having met a woman whose gracious stateliness might have become a court, and who, young as she was, impressed by her strange beauty and noble demeanor those to whom but a short time before she would have been too insignificant for notice.

And if this had been the case soon after her marriage, how much more was it so now, when the lapse of years had settled her in her position and given her the ease of one born to it! Ingraham was aware of this, but from a wide knowledge of the world he was also aware that the women are rare in any rank or position of life who remain complete mistresses of themselves, who are neither tempted to

folly nor swayed to frivolity, when to youth and beauty are added the incense of admiration and the intoxicating consciousness of power. Would it be proved at last that, with all her grand self-possession, *Cármen* was in reality no stronger than others, and that the desires which she had expressed in the old days at Las Cruces were not only the expression of inherited nature, and implanted instinct derived from the past, over which she had no control, but also the longings of individual vanity? This was the question he found himself unable to answer, the problem which tormented him, as it seemed his fate to be tormented by one problem or another connected with the strangely fascinating personality of this woman.

Fascinating to others as well as to him it evidently proved; although he said to himself jealously that no one else could know her as he knew her, no one else could be what he had been, her discoverer, almost her creator. But there was about her a charm and spell—such a charm and such a spell as breathed from the woman upon the deathless canvas of Velasquez—which no one who approached her was so dull as not to feel in greater or less degree. The world in general began to call her “the sorceress,” although it might have been said that no sorcery was needed beyond that with which Nature had so liberally endowed her in the splendor of her matchless beauty. But those who spoke of sorcery intended to convey no intimation of coquetry: it was impossible for the most envious or the most censorious to accuse her of using the weapons of her charms for purposes of conquest. Disdainful of admiration she was not, for disdain expresses too active a sentiment; but so superbly indifferent, so wrapped in a mantle of perfect dignity, that the world, in despair of explaining the spell which emanated from her without effort on her part, called it sorcery, even as Ingraham long since had so called the effect of the portrait of the *Marquésa* on himself.

Among those who seemed to feel this influence most strongly, or at least to exhibit it most unmistakably, was the young diplomatist Rivera, who was in truth not so young but that he had received his social training from several years’ residence in Paris and Madrid. That he brought thence the belief that there is nothing in the fact of her having assumed the bonds of matrimony to prevent a young and beautiful woman from being the object of the most open admiration and gallantry, will not surprise any one who is at all familiar with those gay capitals. Nor was it surprising that on his return to Mexico he found nobody so worthy of what he felt to be the honor of his attentions as the regal beauty whom Don Luis Fernandez del Valle had astonished society by introducing as his wife. It is probable that had she been of far more ordinary attractions, Don Alfredo, as his friends called him in the familiar Spanish fashion, would still, in support of his character as a man of the world, have devoted himself to her; but, his perceptions having been sharpened in a society where the strange and the subtle outrank all other attractions, he was more conscious than any one else, save Ingraham, of *Cármen*’s most strange and subtle charm.

“But it is a mystery, a wonder!” he said once to Ingraham, as they walked away together from an evening in the Fernandez del Valle

house. "How to account for it I know not. Our Mexican women are charming,—I, who know women in so many countries, assure you that there do not exist women more charming,—but it is the exception when one finds among them women of the world, and then only among those of the highest rank, who have been brought up with peculiar advantages. But here is a woman who holds her own with matchless skill,—who would hold it anywhere, since she holds it with me,—and yet she was a nobody, without blood or training, a seamstress, servant, Heaven knows what, when Fernandez del Valle married her."

"Allow me to correct you," said Ingraham, keeping his anger in control, and speaking quite calmly. "It is a gross exaggeration which asserts that Doña Carmen occupied such a position as you indicate. I, who know exactly what that position was before Don Luis thought of marrying her, assure you that when I went to Las Cruces I found her there, her claim of kindred fully recognized, and herself the god-daughter and *protégée* of Doña Antonia; while if she performed some household tasks, it was as a child of the house might have performed them. As for blood, I fancy she stands as nearly related to the Marquésa, from whom she derives her striking appearance, as Don Luis himself; the only difference being that he represents the direct line."

"There is, I imagine, a vast difference also in the character of the blood introduced into the original strain," said Rivera, "although one might be forgiven for swearing that only the purest *sangre azul* flows in the veins of Doña Carmen. It is, as I began by saying, a wonder and a mystery. Besides her rare beauty and her noble manners, there is a fascination connected with her which one cannot resist, something strange and unusual, which, if she were a different woman, would bind a man, body and soul, as by a spell."

Ingraham was silent, while a slight shiver crept over him. Were not these almost identically the words he had himself used when, standing before the picture of the Marquésa, he had thanked God that she was dead? But even as he had then felt his thanksgiving premature, since Carmen was alive and inheritor of all her mysterious power, so here was another who recognized the fact that, if she so willed it, a man would have no alternative but to lay his heart down at her feet, that she might tread on it if she liked.

"I do not believe," he said, slowly, after a pause, "that Doña Carmen exerts with intention the power to fascinate which she possesses and which you are not alone in feeling."

Rivera lifted his shoulders and spread out one hand with a gesture signifying absolute perplexity. "I assure you," he replied, gravely, "that, with all my experience, I am unable to say whether she exerts it with intention, or whether she does not. I know only that I am conscious of her possessing it to a degree I have never known equalled."

To this Ingraham made no answer. What, indeed, could he say? He, too, was in doubt—doubt that grew daily—whether or not Carmen veiled with consummate skill the exercise of her power, or whether it was as unconscious as the dark splendor of her glance and the proud sweetness of her smile.

And there was another to whom this doubt had also come unbidden, and with whom it increased as things nourished in secret are likely to increase. It is possible that, in his pride in his wife's beauty and in her ability to conduct herself so as to compel the admiration of the most reluctant, Don Luis had never thought of drawing any inference of an injurious nature from that strange likeness to the Marquésa which was only a source of pride and justification of his choice, until the appearance of Ingraham. Then it was not so much recollection of their past rivalry, nor vulgar jealousy of the man who had loved *Cármen* with a passion such as men are not likely soon to forget, which made this reappearance coincident with certain awakened perceptions on his part. It was rather to be attributed to a profound confidence in Ingraham's power to read things hidden from his own observation. As the American had discovered the likeness never discerned before between the Velasquez portrait and the humble maiden of Las Cruces, so when he said that this likeness had grown and deepened with *Cármen's* development, the inference which he had himself shrunk from drawing became at once clear to Don Luis. If the likeness, why not then the qualities of which the likeness was but the outward and visible sign? As far as *Cármen* was concerned, Don Luis was prepared to believe any marvel which might spring out of the resemblance and transformation already so marvellous, and there seemed a fitness in the fact that Ingraham, who had first opened his eyes to the likeness which made him see his proud ancestress reproduced line for line and tint for tint in the girl who glided unnoticed as a shadow about his stately house, should now open his eyes farther to all that this likeness meant and portended. Whoever knows men at all is aware that the most difficult of all beliefs to eradicate is that which has no basis in reason but rests upon some one of the deep superstitious instincts common to humanity, and from which the most enlightened are not always free. Such a basis the doubt of his wife, now roused in the mind of Don Luis, possessed. In her conduct there was no flaw, no point to hang suspicion upon; but fixed in his inner consciousness was the thought, "She is the living image of the Marquésa; she must, therefore, possess the Marquésa's nature, and sooner or later it will betray itself; sooner or later the story of the Marquésa will be told over again."

Evil seeds grow apace, and, as there is no seed more evil than suspicion, none other grows so fast in the mind and heart of man. Eyes which look through mists of suspicion are also not long in finding all that they seek; and hence it came to pass that Don Luis, observing his wife as he had never observed her before, began to ask himself the same question which was perplexing Ingraham,—to wit, whether it was possible that a power of fascination so great that all who came within her influence felt it could be unconsciously exerted. Of manifest coquetry there was none. A queen upon her throne could not have preserved a more regal simplicity. But Don Luis was sufficiently a man of the world to know that there is no art so fine as the art which conceals art itself. Watching closely, he soon decided that among all those who surrounded *Carmen* there were two who, if not

specially distinguished by her favor,—for that could be said of no man,—were distinguished by their attentions to her. These were Rivera, in whom the intention of gallantry was not masked by any undue regard to possible gossip, and Ingraham, in whom it was not possible to forget the former lover. Between these two the suspicion of Don Luis hesitated, but together with the passion he had all the deep reserve of his race, the power of holding a feeling under complete control until the moment of certainty and expression came, which has made certain shallow observers charge the Mexican with treachery of nature. Treacherous he is not; but, with passions like a lava-flood when once aroused, he unites the silence and tenacity of his Indian blood. So silent now, but so tenacious of the suspicion roused within him, was Don Luis, and only waiting a moment of certainty to unleash the demon of jealousy to which most of the tragedies of the country are owing.

VII.

It is not to be supposed that during this time Ingraham was unobservant of the fact that Brooke was devoting himself to Inés as far as it was possible to exhibit devotion toward a girl in Mexico. But the perception gave him little concern. In the first place, he knew Brooke well enough to be aware that this was only another of the many flirtations which formed that young gentleman's favorite mode of acquiring a cosmopolitan knowledge of various countries; in the second place, his instinct told him that Inés was not of the material to inspire a serious passion; and in the third place, he knew that had it been otherwise Don Gilberto could be trusted to peremptorily end the affair, since his objection to an American son-in-law had presumably not decreased since that objection was so frankly stated to Ingraham himself. Easy in mind, therefore, he had paid little attention to the proceedings of his friend, until one or two circumstances, attracting his attention, led him to fear that Brooke's ignorance of the conventionalities of the country, and Inés's disregard of them, springing from the social surroundings of her early youth, might result in some scandal which would be exceedingly undesirable to the Fernandez del Valle and to himself.

It was in consequence of this apprehension that he decided to address a word of admonition to the younger man. "Look here, Leslie," he said, at last; "nothing is more disagreeable than to seem to play the part of a spy, however unconsciously, and see what is not meant for one's eyes, but I feel bound to tell you that I have lately observed some signs of a secret understanding between Doña Inés and yourself, and, since I know the country better than you do, I think it only right to warn you that if others perceive such a thing it will compromise the girl very seriously, and probably make anything like a good marriage impossible for her."

Brooke looked at him quietly. "I take your warning in such good part, my dear fellow," he said, "that I have not anything to say about the general expediency of minding one's own business. No doubt you

are right, and if Doña Inésita, as her friends call her, should be found out in her little flirtation—harmless though it really is—the social consequences would probably be unpleasant. But don't you think it is fair to suppose that she is as well aware of that as I am?—or as you are, either, for that matter? And, this being so,—I put it to you frankly,—is it exactly my place to invoke the fear of Mrs. Grundy? It might be very chivalrous to do so, but I have not found that form of chivalry generally appreciated by women."

"To invoke the fear of Mrs. Grundy is not necessary in order to avoid tempting a woman to indiscretion," said Ingraham.

"And is that the *rôle* for which you have cast me?" returned Brooke, with some amusement. "I should not like to say that the tempting was on the other side; but at least I may be permitted to remark that in our little amusement Doña Inés has so far decidedly taken the initiative, and, since she is a young lady who does credit to her American blood in her quality of wide-awakeness, I see no reason why I should hold back when she beckons forward."

"There is the reason," answered Ingraham, a little sternly, "that while any scandal affecting this little *intrigante*—who has the soul of an adventuress, as I saw at once—would be a small matter as far as she is concerned, it would very disagreeably affect the Fernandez del Valle, and be a poor return on your part for their kindness and hospitality."

It was with an effort that Brooke retained his appearance of non-chalance under the other's seriousness, but, after pausing a moment to light a cigar, he said, carelessly, "Don't make a mountain out of a mole-hill: it is such unnecessary expenditure of energy. I have already told you that the fair Inés is as well qualified to take care of herself as any young person with whom I have ever had the honor to be acquainted, and I assure you I have not the least intention of playing the part of tempter which you so flatteringly assign me, and leading her into any indiscretion. We amuse ourselves, her vanity is gratified, and my knowledge of the different types of feminine nature is enlarged. *Voilà tout.*"

It was now Ingraham's turn to be silent for a moment. There was, he felt, no end to be gained by allowing his irritation to express itself. He made a turn across the room before he answered. Then, returning to where Brooke sat quietly smoking, he said, abruptly, "The best will be for us to leave Mexico. Have you any objection to doing so?"

"The greatest possible," replied Brooke, imperturbably. "Mexico amuses me: why should I leave it? Now, with you"—he hesitated perceptibly—"the case is different. There may be reasons why you should think it best to leave. A flirtation with Doña Inés is a trifle, but a *grande passion* for her sister would be no trifle. There might be elements of tragedy in that."

"What do you mean?" demanded Ingraham, in a tone which startled himself. He was confounded by the audacity of the other, yet the words were like a lurid flash letting in light upon his own position. "Do you mean to insinuate that Doña Carmen—"

Brooke threw up his hands in protestation. "Heaven forbid!" he

exclaimed. "I insinuate nothing of Doña *Cármen*. She is as far above insinuation as above suspicion. And I had no right to speak of the matter. Only, what is plain to me might possibly be equally plain to others."

"And what is that?" asked *Ingraham*, eying him steadily, his face white, the veins on his forehead swelling into cords.

"I have already said it," replied the other; "and since I said it with a good intention, there is no reason why you should be offended. Briefly, my friend, it is plain to me that you love this woman with a serious passion,—such a passion as has worked the undoing of many a man; and, this being so, I put it to you if there is not danger of a greater and graver scandal affecting the *Fernandez del Valle* than through any light folly of mine with Doña *Inés*."

Silence followed this inquiry. In the midst of his anger *Ingraham* recognized that the speaker was so far right, that there was indeed no comparison between the gravity of any scandal, or shadow of scandal, touching *Cármen*, and one which should touch a person so insignificant as *Inés Rosa*. But although the light so abruptly cast revealed to him a fact which up to this time he had endeavored in some degree at least to conceal from himself,—namely, that his passion for her who stood always in his thoughts as *Cármen* of *Las Cruces* was more serious now, had more the depth and gravity of a great passion since it had been fed upon daily observation of the manner in which she satisfied and fulfilled every ideal that her appearance inspired, than when he had left her in despair three years before,—he nevertheless declared to himself that what he felt was his own affair and could not by any possibility reflect upon her. Yet, even while he reassured himself in this manner, the fallacy of such a conclusion struck him, as he remembered that characteristic of society—the same in all lands and under all skies—which leads it invariably to the most severe judgment in any case open to doubt. No: since it appeared that he was so poor in the power of self-control that he wore his heart upon his sleeve, and could not keep the light of passion out of his eyes when they looked upon her, he must not stay longer to expose her to the danger of that pitiless judgment. He turned to *Brooke*.

"I have no right to be offended at what I brought upon myself," he said, coldly. "And I so far acknowledge the justice of your warning that I repeat my proposal: let us both leave Mexico. Considerations of danger to ourselves would, I fancy, affect neither of us. But when it is a question of possible danger to others, however remote, we have no right to be indifferent. Let us start to-morrow for—anywhere you please."

Brooke hesitated. He was, as he had declared, very well entertained in Mexico; and the proposal to leave was exceedingly distasteful to him. But something in *Ingraham's* manner made him feel that the situation was not to be treated lightly. The thought flashed through his mind, "I will go, since he makes a point of it; and then, if my interest survives the test, I can easily find an excuse to return." So, after a moment, he said, "Not to-morrow. That is a little too abrupt, for I have several engagements. But if you really insist—

although I see no need of such extreme haste—we will go the day following.”

“Very well,” replied Ingraham. “I shall make all arrangements, and expect you to keep your word.”

A few details were then settled, and with this understanding they separated.

Brooke, as usual, went to the house of the Fernandez del Valle that evening, but Ingraham did not. He sternly resolved that he would not again trust himself in *Cármen*'s presence, since, as he bitterly thought, he allowed all that he felt to write itself on his face for the world to read. A proud man always, and a man intensely reserved in whatever concerned his inner life, he determined to permit himself no further opportunity for such self-betrayal. Recognizing clearly that the remedy from which he had hoped so much had failed him,—that the *Cármen* of reality fell in no regard below the *Cármen* of his imagination,—he recognized also that hope of cure there was none, save such as might lie in his own steadfast power of self-conquest. He would not, therefore, see her again; but so sharp was the pang, so acute the sense of loss caused by this resolution, that in order to escape from his thoughts, and also from that insistent desire for her presence, drawing him like a cord toward her, he finally went out into the city streets.

Usually there was infinite entertainment for him in the crowded thoroughfares of this most picturesque city of the New World, this city transported in every line of its architecture from Old Spain, touched with the brilliance of Paris, the glamour of the East, and the strange, wild charm of that primitive race which is in its history and its genius the most interesting of aboriginal peoples. But to-night he passed unheeding along the streets, one side of which lay in the white light of sublimated moonshine, the other in deep, sharply-cut shadow. Leaving the Hotel del Jardin,—that hostelry formed of the cloisters and garden of the greatest and most ancient Franciscan monastery of New Spain,—he made a short cut through the vast courts of the ponderous palace now known as the Hotel Iturbide, and came out through its sculptured portal on the Calle San Francisco, with its brilliant shops and ever-thronged pavements. To loiter here, either by night or day, was generally a very agreeable occupation to this man, with his painter's eye and his knowledge of many civilizations; but now the picturesque varieties of the passing crowd hardly attracted his glance; he turned his face toward the Avenida, and, walking like one who had an appointment to keep, very soon found himself crossing the Mirador de la Alameda and entering beneath the shades of that beautiful pleasure-ground.

And if it is beautiful by day, what shall we call it by night, and by moonlight, this place of broad, mysterious avenues bordered by forest-like glades and overreached by the spreading boughs of mighty trees, avenues that lead to balustraded circles in the centre of which fountains surrounded by Nile lilies sleep like mirrors of silver, and carved stone benches of classic form, under deeply drooping shades, seem waiting for the veiled lady and the plumed cavalier who will

presently glide out of the shadowy vistas and meet, to tell the old story of passion and romance? For it is an enchanted spot, made for romance and poetry and all those fair and gracious things which the world embalms in its heart forever, even while the materialist laughs and the cynic sneers, this Alameda of Mexico, when night falls over its avenues and *glorietas*, its fountains and statues and depths of slumbering shade. And, to add to the charm, it is at such time almost entirely deserted. No band plays here in the evening to draw the people by its melody as flies are drawn by honey, nor is it brilliantly illuminated. Here and there lamps shine amid the deep foliage, and a policeman's lantern placed on the ground at some circle is a sign that the guardian of law and order is near,—and let it be said, in passing, that no better policed city than Mexico exists,—but for the most part the leafy alleys are all empty of loiterers, the benches hold no figures save such as the romantic imagination may place upon them, or, by chance, some pair of whispering lovers of low degree. The place is left to silence and mystery and shadow.

It had always charmed Ingraham at such times, but never more than to-night, when its deep quiet was like a soothing balm to his spirit; and, although he was perhaps unaware of the fact, its perfect picturesqueness, enchanting the eye at every turn, was a wholesome distraction to his thoughts.

Pausing now and then to contemplate some picture made up of silvery light and black shade, of masses of feathery foliage, of the white grace of marble and the gleam of still water, he paced slowly along the wide, tree-arched avenues, with occasional intervals of rest on some seat which commanded a view of the radiating vistas filled with mysterious shadows, for a length of time of which he took no heed until a church clock near by struck the hour of midnight. He was at that moment seated on a bench at the point where one of the avenues entered a wide *glorieta*, and as the mellow strokes fell on his ear he said to himself that the time of temptation was over, that it was now too late to go to the Fernandez del Valle house, that his last opportunity for seeing Carmen once more was past, and—this in deep depression and weariness of soul—that he would now go home, if such term might be applied to his hotel chamber.

But before he had put this resolution into practical effect, while he was still gazing, though with absent eyes, at the loveliness of the silver-bathed scene, something occurred which caught his attention. Along a wide, deserted avenue leading from the northeast corner of the Alameda, two figures came, silently, mysteriously as if evolved from the shadows to which they seemed akin,—a man and a woman, moving slowly and talking earnestly in very low tones. They passed within a few feet of Ingraham without perceiving his still figure in the deep shade, and crossed the *glorieta*, pausing a moment by the central fountain to look at the still water mirroring the high-sailing moon and the sleeping lilies upon its breast, then moved onward and entered one of the opposite avenues.

It was not until they had passed out of his sight that Ingraham discovered that he was trembling—trembling as if with a violent ague

—in every limb. For what had he seen? *Cármen!* It was impossible to doubt it. True, she was closely wrapped in the muffling folds of the *tapado*, a great black shawl, which, like the habit of a nun, makes all women look alike, and can be used effectually for purpose of concealment. But there is one thing which not even this disguising drapery can disguise, and that is the carriage of the head and shoulders. Now, *Cármen's* bearing was as distinctive and as full of charm as her beauty. The shawl, drawn far over the face of this woman and held firmly with one hand under the chin, clung closely about the head and shoulders and left their outlines clearly defined, especially in rear view. On these outlines Ingraham's gaze had fastened as she passed across the moonlight-flooded space and paused by the fountain. The pause had been but for a moment, yet that moment, which would have been long enough to imprint its likeness upon the sensitive plate of a camera, was more than long enough to leave it with equal clearness fixed in the mind of the man who was not only lover but artist, who had dwelt upon those lines as he only dwells upon form and contour who is to transfer them, in the second birth of art, to canvas or marble. He did not even ask himself if he could be mistaken. He was perfectly sure. It was *Cármen*. He said so to himself in a tumult of amaze and horror. *Cármen!*—from whom he had resolved to exile himself, lest the faintest breath of scandal should blow upon her through his devotion! *Cármen*, recklessly flinging her fair name into the dust by being here alone at night—with whom?

VIII.

It was not until both figures had passed completely out of his sight amid the deep shadows that, with a start, he asked himself this question. Of the man he had not thought at all so long as that feminine figure, with its matchless bearing and those beautiful well-known lines of head and neck and shoulders, had filled his gaze; but now that they were gone he had time to think of the other unnoticed figure, and ask himself, with a sense of burning rage which turned him as hot as he had been cold the moment before, who it could be.

Suspicion at once leaped to Rivera. One brief, passing glance before his attention was riveted on the woman—a glance given when the pair had first come into view down the shadowy avenue—had told him that the man was a gentleman, for there is no twilight deep enough to render this fact doubtful to eyes accustomed to discriminate in social ranks and conditions; and not only a gentleman, but one with the nameless stamp of fashionable distinction upon him. Such was Ingraham's first, swiftly passing impression, the next instant forgotten as his glance fell on the woman clinging to the arm of her companion, walking with such light, easy majesty of step and air, her draped head turned toward him with an attention that rendered her unconscious of the statue-like figure in the corner of the bench over which the foliated boughs made a canopy so dense as to be impenetrable to the moonbeams. Following her with his eyes, how was it

possible for him to think of anything else, even of that companion for whom she was perilling all and more than all that fate had so unexpectedly given her? But *now*—now that she was gone, wrapped in the mysterious shadow out of which she had come—he had time to ask himself who, if not Rivera, this man could be, and to spring to his feet with a fierce impulse to follow and take him by the throat.

But before he had traversed the *glorieta*, on which the marvellous Mexican moonlight lay so whitely, saner thoughts had come to him. Whether it was Rivera or not, what right had he to interfere if Cármen chose to walk with him in the Alameda at midnight, or to walk with him around the world? All right of his to interfere in anything which concerned her had ended, once and for all, in that sunset hour at Las Cruces when she had put him aside and passed over his heart

To the world made for her.

Remembering this, and remembering also all his presentiments and fears respecting her, from the hour that he had first recognized her wondrous likeness to the Velasquez portrait, he felt like one who sees before his eyes the fulfilment of tragic prophecy and tells himself that he has known always what the end would be. And yet—how could the Cármen whom he knew and loved, not the fanciful Cármen evolved from his imagination of what the Marquésa was, but the Cármen who looked, spoke, and smiled upon him with such gentle frankness, such sweet and perfect dignity, such proud consciousness of all that her position imposed,—how could *that* Cármen be here and thus?

And then for the first time doubts of her identity assailed him. Was he mad to draw such positive assurance merely from the draped outlines of a head and shoulders? It was possible—not probable, certainly, but barely possible—that another woman might exist with those matchless, melting lines and that imperial carriage. They were no longer before his eyes, so he began to question thus, and, doubt having once entered his mind, he felt that he must go mad if he did not resolve it into certainty.

With a new intention, therefore, he proceeded on his way, leaving the fountain, by which he had paused as if hoping to read in it the secret of what face it had for an instant reflected, and entered the avenue down which the figures had vanished. In the obscurity formed by the interlacing shade above, he could at first see nothing of them; but after a minute or two of quick walking he perceived them in advance of him, pacing slowly still, as people well entertained with each other. Avoiding the middle of the avenue, where light was fullest, he kept in the deeper shadow of one side of the broad, straight way, so that no backward glance, unless very keen, could detect his presence, and so followed them with the quiet persistence of a sleuth-hound or an Indian. What he promised himself in this following were simply two things: first, to satisfy himself by some means if that shrouded figure was indeed Cármen, and, should it prove so, to learn who was the man for whom she thus cast away the jewel of her fair name.

When they reached the end of the avenue and had before them the broad white space where in the clear moonlight every object was distinct as day, beyond which lie the Calle de San Diego and the handsome houses on its farther side, he quickened his steps involuntarily, wondering what they would do, if they would go farther in this direction, or if, clinging to the shadows, they would turn, and so meet him face to face. They did neither. Passing quickly across the moonlit space, they entered the first verdurous avenue which presented itself, and so turned back in the direction they had come, but by a different way.

Ingraham did the same. It may be said for him that the thought that he was playing the spy upon people in whose affairs he had no right to interfere did not once occur to him, so absorbed was he in the vital necessity, as it seemed to him, of discovering if this was indeed Cármen who walked before him through the silver lights and shadows. Through the entire length of the deserted Alameda—growing more enchanted in its beauty with every hour, as the moon like a great white balloon sailed higher and higher in the hyacinth-blue sky—he followed them, perceiving soon that their course was directed to that northeast corner whence they had first appeared. Reaching this, they left the pleasure-ground, crossed the northern end of the Mirador de la Alameda, passed by the ancient and desecrated church of Santa Ysabel, and followed the street known by many different names which leads thence directly eastward. Lower and lower sank Ingraham's heart as he followed them, keeping himself at a discreet distance and as far as possible in the shadows sharply cast by the tall old houses, for they were holding their way directly for Cármen's home, which was in the neighborhood of the Plazuela de Santo Domingo, that old quarter of palaces. Like all the great houses of the splendid colonial period, that of the Fernandez del Valle, besides its vast courts, had in the rear a beautiful garden, the tall trees of which showed above the high wall that enclosed the property from the street in its rear. And, after several turns, it was into this street that Ingraham finally saw the two whom he had so steadily kept in view enter. He could not follow at once, being too far behind; but in truth he hardly needed to do so. All was plain now,—fearfully, damnably plain. The woman was Cármen, and, having taken this midnight promenade with her lover, she would now let herself into her husband's house by some rear entrance fit for intrigues like this. It was only from the grim determination to make no possible mistake, to leave no faintest thread of hope, and also to learn who was the man, that Ingraham kept on. He turned into the street—a narrow *callejon* lined chiefly by dead walls—which the two had entered, and, lo! what he anticipated had come to pass. There were two no longer. He saw a door in the wall of the Fernandez del Valle garden in the act of closing, and, walking rapidly away from that door, in the opposite direction, so that there was no hope of meeting him, the figure of the man,—alone.

At that sight Ingraham's blood again stirred fiercely in his veins, a mist of passion rose to his brain, his hands clinched themselves, and he quickened his own pace. Again he forgot that he had no right to

challenge *Cármen's* lover, to take him, as was his wild desire, by the throat and choke the soul out of his body. He was fury-blinded, for when the elemental savage that is in all men is roused in such a man as this—a man who has never even suspected its existence in him—its reign is brief indeed, but, while it lasts, of overwhelming power. Walking rapidly, intent only on overtaking that vanishing figure, he had gained the lately opened garden door, was abreast with and passed it.

But hardly had he made five steps beyond when he heard a harsh sound, as of a key sharply turned in a lock, and, wheeling quickly around, he saw the door again open. He paused, too much astonished to think how strange might seem his presence in this spot, and waited for a space of time which was no more than a heart-beat, but which seemed to him far longer, for who should issue. Would it be *Cármen*, expecting to find her lover lingering still and herself returning for some last word? He had time to think that he hoped so, in order that he, the man whose love she had first betrayed, might wither her with his scorn, when there stepped forth into the brilliant moonlight—Don Luis.

IX.

The two men—the only two now in all the length of the short, narrow street—faced each other in silence for a moment. What swiftly contending thoughts and emotions filled that moment, especially on the part of *Ingraham*, surprised in a situation so false, and placed, as he at once perceived, in a position so awkward, it would be vain to attempt to say. There was a pause, in which they silently looked at each other, and then, just as *Ingraham*, gathering himself together, was about to speak, Don Luis broke the silence:

"So it is you, *Señor Ingraham*," he said, quietly. "My only doubt was whether it was you—or another. Be good enough to enter my garden. We have that to arrange for which the street is no place."

"*Señor*," replied *Ingraham*, "there is no need that I should enter your garden, for you and I have nothing to arrange. I have been walking, and chanced merely to be passing your gate just as you opened it."

"A very fortunate chance for me," said Don Luis, with the same air of courtesy, although his dark eyes were shining with an ominous fire. "It is a chance for which I have waited, and for which I would have given much. Enter, *señor*,"—this more sternly: "you are a gentleman: it is therefore not necessary that I shall insist."

"If I yield to your request and enter," answered *Ingraham*, "it is only that we may say whatever needs to be said between us—and that is little—in a place not so liable to interruption as this."

Don Luis bowed, and, drawing back with punctilious Mexican politeness, motioned the other to precede him through the door; then, following, he carefully closed and locked it.

The garden into which they entered was of a most fairy-like loveliness. Even in this moment of intense preoccupation its beauty could not but strike with a sense of charm on *Ingraham's* beauty-

loving senses. Trees, tall and grand as those of the ancient Franciscan garden he knew so well, lifted their massive trunks and royal crowns of foliage higher than the stately house, the sculptured arches of which gleamed white at the farther end of this paradise of verdure. Underneath the kingly trees there was a luxuriant yet orderly wilderness of all those shrubs and flowers which make Mexico an enchanted Land of Bloom. Through their clustering depths ran alleys carefully kept, centring, according to the usual Mexican fashion, in a *glorieta*,—a miniature compared with those of the Alameda, but following the model exactly,—where a fountain played in a stone basin, and carved stone benches were placed around the outside of the circle beneath the drooping shade of fragrantly flowering trees and shrubs.

Into this open, silver-flooded spot Don Luis led his unwilling guest, and then, turning again, faced him.

"You were right in saying that words between us need be few," he said. "It is enough that I saw my wife come in, and that I found you, her companion, at the gate where she left you. Words are idle after that. One of us——"

"Stop!" cried Ingraham, extending his hand in a gesture of overwhelming surprise and protest. In the agitation of his mind he had absolutely not thought of this,—that *he* should be taken for the favored man, the lover whom he had followed with such fury in his heart! At the worst he had anticipated only an embarrassing difficulty in accounting for his presence, or questions, perhaps, which he could not answer. But this!—For an instant he was speechless with astonishment, and then he saw, as by a lightning-flash, how hopeless of explanation his position was. He, and no other, had been in sight when Don Luis appeared, and how was it possible to give any sufficient reason for his presence in such a spot at such an hour? Yet for the sake of his own honor he must deny the charge. So, calling together all his powers of self-command, he went on calmly,—

"Pardon me for interrupting you, señor, but I cannot leave you for a moment longer under what I perceive to be a total misapprehension. I have been strolling for an hour or two about the streets entirely alone. Chance led my steps into this neighborhood, and it was altogether by accident that I was in the vicinity of your gate when you came out. As for Doña Carmen, I have not had the honor of seeing her this evening."

"I congratulate you upon the fact that you lie like a gentleman, señor," replied Don Luis, with an ironical bow. "We are both men of the world and familiar with the code of honor which requires that a man shall perjure himself if necessary to shield a woman. But you do not shield her. I saw Doña Carmen. That is enough. We will now waive farther speech and proceed to the business which must be settled between us."

He turned as he spoke and took from the bench nearest him two swords, which he held out together to Ingraham. "Take one of these," he said, sternly. "I do not choose to kill an unarmed man."

Ingraham drew back a step and folded his arms. "Nor do I choose, either, to kill a man with whom I have no quarrel, nor yet to be

killed under a mistake," he said, with equal sternness. "There is no question of perjuring myself in order to shield a woman. My word to that effect should be enough. I will not fight you, because I have never injured you, and I am sure that you will do me the justice to believe that had I done so I should be only too ready to give you satisfaction."

"I believe only that you are a coward as well as a liar!" replied the Mexican, hissing the words through his teeth. "But your cowardice shall not save you. Take one of these swords and defend yourself like a man, or I will kill you like a dog!"

Ingraham recognized that there was no more to be said. As well reason with a wild beast thirsting for blood as with this man in whom all that was most savage and fierce in his nature was roused by the supreme injury which in all lands and in all ages men have felt can be atoned for only by the most simple and primitive vengeance. It was hard to kill or be killed—he guiltless—because malicious fate had put him in the place of the man who, he could not but feel, had done him also a grievous wrong, in destroying forever his ideal of the woman he loved. But to expostulate or farther affirm his innocence was useless, and to be murdered without defending himself impossible. He took, therefore, one of the swords, which appeared to be of equal length, and, saying merely, "Remember, señor, that I defend myself because you leave me no alternative but to do so, and not because there is the least reason for our hostile meeting," he placed himself in position.

It was fortunate for him that he was an accomplished swordsman, the result of assiduous practice in his younger days in the best fencing-school in Paris, for the man who opposed him now was not only expert in the use of his weapon, but filled with a deadly purpose. From the first instant in which their swords touched, Ingraham recognized his intention to kill him, and that as speedily as possible. He fenced, therefore, as a man fences who feels that his life depends upon the clearness of his head, the quickness of his eye, and the readiness of his hand. What he desired to do was to disarm his antagonist. But Don Luis was very nearly, if not quite, his equal in skill, and for a time fought warily. Then, growing more excited as he perceived the ability of the other to maintain his guard, he began to press more closely upon him with savage lunges which it required all of Ingraham's skill and science to parry.

They had been fighting for several minutes, the sharp clashing of their swords, as they crossed and re-crossed, alone breaking the moonlit stillness of the garden, and Ingraham was beginning to feel that if he could not succeed in his endeavor to disarm his fierce opponent the end must be that the shining blade he was so closely watching would finally pass his guard and run him through the body, when an interruption occurred.

Absorbed in their contest, with breath coming short and quick and the clashing and ringing of steel in their ears, both men had been unaware of flying steps coming along the garden paths toward them, and so were equally unprepared for the apparition which burst upon them when Carmen appeared in the circle and made a motion as if to place herself between them.

Instinctively both lowered their weapons and turned toward her. Anything more beautiful, anything more majestic, than her appearance at this moment it is impossible to imagine. Dressed in white,—such a loose, *négligée* robe as a lady assumes in her chamber,—she had evidently not even waited to snatch up the mantle without which a Mexican woman seldom stirs, and her glorious hair hung in a shower of gold behind her far below her waist. Half angel, half queen, she seemed in her almost unearthly beauty, as she stood in the white lustre of the moonlight, her hand lifted more in a gesture of command than entreaty.

"*En el nombre de Dios!*" she cried, her voice ringing clear as the steel which had been lowered before her, "are you Christian men that strive to kill each other thus! Luis!—Señor Ingraham!—Mother of God! what madness has seized you!"

"Is it for you to ask, false and shameless woman?" cried her husband, turning upon her. "Begone—until I am ready to deal with you!"

His countenance as well as his voice was so full of fury that Ingraham would not have been surprised had he lifted his sword and run it through her heart. Indeed, so much had he heard of the fearful lengths to which the passion of jealousy carries Mexicans, both men and women, that instinctively he made a step forward to interpose his own blade, if necessary, for her protection.

But it was not necessary. The sword was never forged that would not have fallen before her glance, as, instead of drawing back, she made a step nearer to the man who had thus addressed her.

"What is that you say to me?" she asked. "I false and shameless—I, *Cármen*! It must be, then, that you are mad."

"No, I am most sane—and restored to sanity by you," he replied, violently. "I was mad to take you, living likeness of a woman false and no doubt shameless as yourself, to be my wife and bear my name and honor. I have fared as might have been expected, fool and dupe that I was! But I can be duped no longer by your fair face, your noble seeming, and your matchless craft. I know you now for what you are, and later I will deal with you. Now go—that I may kill your lover first!"

"My lover!" she repeated, and it was as if one dead had spoken, so white and horror-struck had she become. But in her whiteness and her horror she was still majestic, still without sign of either shame or fear. With a superb movement she turned from the man who had thus justly charged or thus vilely insulted her, and looked at Ingraham.

"Señor," she said, with a dignity he had never seen matched, "have you no word to say of this most false and undeserved accusation? Am I growing mad, that I see you here, sword in hand, in deadly combat with my husband, as my lover?"

Even in that moment Ingraham asked himself if this could be the woman whom so short a time before he had followed through the avenues of the Alameda and along the silent streets. Was it possible, was it within the power of guilt, however matchless in craft, to simulate innocence in such manner as this? Looking at her, meeting the

full challenge of her direct gaze, he felt that the evidence of his own senses was insufficient to make him believe her other than she appeared.

"Señora," he answered, with deep respect, "I have not waited for your coming to tell your husband that he has made a strange mistake. But I now repeat, in your presence, that this is the first time I have addressed a word to you since we parted last in your own *sala*, and that it was accident, instead of any appointment, which brought me to the gate of your garden to-night. That you found us in deadly combat is easily explained: a man capable of defending his life does not permit himself to be unresistingly murdered."

"Murdered!" she repeated. "You!—and for what? Answer!" she said, turning imperiously toward her husband. "If you would not have me believe you a maniac, answer what reason you have to suspect me of being a dishonored woman, and this gentleman of being my partner in dishonor and guilt."

Even Don Luis, maddened by that passion which of all others most obscures the faculty of judgment and sets reason at defiance, could not resist the effect of her speech and manner. If she were guilty, never before had guilt worn such a seeming, never before had culprit arraigned judge with such authority and such indignation.

He looked at her for an instant with the fire of his glance burning fiercely under his dark, bent brows, before he replied. "It is not for me to answer your questions," he then said, sternly, "for you are as well aware as I am what reason I have, not to suspect but to know you a dishonored woman, who not half an hour ago entered this garden, returning from a midnight meeting with your lover. Nay, not a word!—*I saw you!* That is enough. For I have long suspected you and this gentleman, your former lover, your discoverer as he once proudly declared himself, and, finding by chance the gate unlocked, I waited to see who would enter. You came, stealing like a thief into the home my folly had given you, and, letting you pass, in order that I might surprise your companion, I hurried to the gate and found this man, whom yet you have the unparalleled audacity to declare to be not your lover."

She threw up her arms with a tragic gesture, and lifted her face toward heaven.

"I declare it again!" she cried, solemnly. "I swear it by the blood of God! He is no more my lover than it was I whom you saw enter this garden. What he was doing at the gate I know not. But I had not left the house to-night, until I heard the clash of your swords and came to learn the cause."

"A likely story!" said Don Luis, with bitter scorn, "that you would have come to learn the cause of clashing swords, instead of rousing the household, unless you had known the cause full well. Infamous woman, do not add falsehood to your guilt, for I tell you again that I saw distinctly the figure which entered this garden from the street, and it was yourself. Who else could it have been? Who could be mistaken for you?"

"God knows!" she answered, in an awe-struck tone. "Perhaps the shadow of that woman who laid her dead hand on my life in my

childhood, whose living likeness I am, and whose fate I seem doomed to repeat. I felt it always,—a shadow, a presentiment of certain evil!—Did I not tell you so long ago at Las Cruces?" turning with sudden energy to Ingraham. "But let the fate fall on me alone. Remember"—her voice sank to a tone of fear and horror—"her story; remember the man who was slain, innocent perhaps as you, while *she*, no doubt, was innocent as I. Go, go! *Por el amor de Dios*, go! It is the fatality of that old tragedy which is upon us. Go!"

Her passionate anguish—for it was nothing less—filled and possessed her so that she sank upon her knees, holding out her hands to him in an attitude of entreaty he could never forget, while the tones of her voice, rising again in the last adjurations, rang so clearly on the still night air that their sound evidently penetrated to the house. There was a sound of doors hastily opened, lights appeared, voices were heard. Don Luis turned to Ingraham.

"Go!" he said, sternly, repeating Cármen's word. "Our meeting will come later. If you have one instinct of a gentleman, do not be found here. Go!"

As he turned in obedience to this imperative command, Ingraham saw Cármen sink to the ground. The next moment he found himself in the street, while the garden gate clashed shut behind him, as if ending a wild and fearful dream.

X.

It was a proof of Ingraham's condition of mind—of the effect of the scenes through which he had passed—that as he walked away from that closed door, along the narrow, silent *callejon*, he asked himself if it were not possible that Cármen was right, that the false situation in which he and she—for he now believed her innocent as himself—were involved was indeed owing not to any human agency, but to some *diablerie* born of that strange likeness which she bore to the long-dead Marquésa. If that form which had walked before him and which had entered the garden was not Cármen, who was it? Who, as Don Luis had asked, could be mistaken for *her*?—and mistaken by the two men who knew her best? He did not wonder at Cármen's answer to that question, for he alone knew how deeply her wild fancies about the Marquésa were wrought into her inner life and had formed part of it from her earliest childhood. To her the obvious solution of the occurrence that had placed her in a position so terrible was the fatality which overshadowed her, and of which she had always been so conscious that she had drawn back in dread from anything that could increase the mysterious bond between the portrait and herself, when Ingraham first proposed to make her resemblance to it clear by painting her likeness. Remembering this, remembering his own instinctive forebodings, which had seized him afresh when he saw how that likeness had deepened, and remembering also the indescribable effect which the picture had produced upon him,—an effect so strong that he could not wonder at its power over the imagination of a girl

who was like a vessel fitted by Nature to feel it,—he, too, was almost ready to believe that the web of fate closing around *Cármen* and himself had been woven by no mortal influence, but was the long-drawn effect of that tragedy which had wrecked the *Marquésa's* life.

The old shudder—that which he had felt as he stood before the marvellous picture, glowing with tints almost of life itself, and which he had again felt when he saw *Cármen* in the full maturity of her equally marvellous beauty—passed over him as he thus seemed to recognize the power of a sinister destiny which had drawn him from the other side of the world to make him the sport of a fate which he was unable to avert. For how could he prove *Cármen's* innocence and his own?—how speak of the figure—mortal woman, or appearance only—which he had followed through the moonlight, and which had trapped him into a situation that justified the conclusions *Don Luis* had drawn? How was it possible for the latter to believe the wildly improbable story of his accidental appearance in the place where he was found, or—did he choose to tell it—the equally improbable story of another man who had disappeared as completely as if the earth had swallowed him? Possible explanation there seemed none; and yet without explanation how could he avoid fighting *Don Luis*, who would surely insult him publicly if there were no other means of forcing him to fight? Instant departure was open to him, but that he did not take into consideration for a moment. Even had his own honor not been involved, he could not have left *Cármen* in this crisis of her strange fate,—*Cármen*, to whom, acting under a prophetic instinct which it astonished himself to recall, he had offered himself as a defender should she ever need one. And surely she needed one now. He was conscious of a cold chill as he thought how absolutely she was in the power of a man who had said of the ancient tragedy, “There would have been few to blame him had he run his sword through *her* heart also.” What was to prevent his doing now, in like circumstances, what he had then spoken of,—this man who came of a race ever fiercely unforgiving to infidelity? He recalled the stories he had heard from those who knew the country well, of knife-thrusts that had avenged even the suspicion of betrayal. *Don Luis* would not kill his wife, or mark her for life, after the fashion of a *peon* whose Indian blood was aflame with *vino mescal*, but such vengeance as a gentleman could permit himself he would surely take. Of that *Ingraham* had no doubt. His own power to help the woman who had laid her touch so unconsciously yet so persistently upon his life was small indeed. But he registered a solemn vow that what man could do in her behalf he would do, not only because she was to him yet, and in spite of all his efforts, the one woman of the world, but because the old sense of responsibility came back to him, and he felt himself as much the creator of the changed conditions of her life as of the picture that had revealed her to the eyes of the man she had chosen.

So, endeavoring to regulate the tumult of his thoughts, he walked through the silent streets, where all the noises of the day were hushed, and the closely-barred houses with their grated windows, standing in

white light or wrapped in deep shadow, seemed fit homes of strangeness and mystery. Yet the sense of moving in a dream never left him, not even when knocking up the sulky *portero* to admit him into his hotel, or when laying himself down to await the calmer thoughts and possible developments of the next day.

But when he awoke the next morning, after finally falling into a brief and troubled sleep, it was still with a sense of absolute unreality that he recalled the events of the past night, and questioned whether what had taken place had not been merely a vision of disturbed slumber. It was some time before rousing recollection could convince him of the reality of all that had occurred; but, this once accomplished, the wild fancies of the night vanished, as he considered the situation in which he found himself by the clear light of day and of reason.

Viewed thus, the circumstances that involved him as in a net seemed hardly less hopeless of explanation now than they had appeared in the hours of darkness. In order to make even an attempt to clear himself, it would be necessary to tell the story of the two figures he had seen in the Alameda and which he had followed to the gate in the rear of the Fernandez del Valle house. But how was it possible to tell such a story as this, even if he were able to prove the existence of the man who had so quickly disappeared, since it placed him in the position of a spy,—a position which he now blushed to recall, wondering what madness had for the time possessed him,—since it added the farther proof of *his* identification of *Cármen* to that of *Don Luis*? Clearly, for her sake alone, his lips were sealed, and this, which would have been the case under any circumstances, was especially so since the strong impression of her innocence produced by her presence, her manner, her voice, had not faded from his mind. Here in the clear, sober daylight, as in the mysterious shadowy night, he repeated to himself that he believed her assertion rather than the testimony of his own sight. For, although he as well as *Don Luis* had been prepared to doubt her by the suspicions and fears which, setting reason at defiance, her singular likeness to the *Marquésa* had inspired, it was now, as ever, only necessary for him to hear her speak to forget, in the conviction of her lofty simplicity, all these suspicions and fears. He put aside the wild fantasy that one so like herself could only have been the ancestress whom she resembled; but he did not for an instant doubt her sincerity in believing this,—the less because he was not himself free from the same superstition. For he was as sure as herself that, whether what he had seen was mortal being or shadow of the dead, the fatality which pursued them was the same,—a fatality which plainly and evidently tended to a repetition of the tragedy that had wrecked the life of the woman whose living image she was.

To feel one's self in the grasp of overmastering fate—of a fate which no effort can avert, relentless as that of the Greek dramatists and pitiless as the action of Nature—is not a common experience. But it was one which came to Ingraham now. Like an Arab, he said to himself, *Kismet*. It was in vain that he had gone away, that he had

put the width of the world between himself and Cármen and the accursed picture that had bewitched them both. His steps had been drawn back by—why had he not recognized it?—the same influence that had fallen over him as he stood before the portrait first, the same influence that had now woven around him a net of circumstances which he had no more power to break than one bound hand and foot by a fabled spell of sorcery.

This being so, there was nothing to do but await the issue of events. With regard to what the first event would be he had not the least doubt. A messenger would come from Don Luis charged with a challenge, which he did not see his way either to accept or decline. To accept would be to acknowledge that he had done him a wrong; to decline would be to incur a stigma of cowardice, and, unless he promptly quitted Mexico, to bring upon himself a public affront which would render a duel unavoidable. He was still revolving in his mind this dilemma, when a knock at the door caused him to say to himself that the hour of decision had come. He walked across the floor and opened it, facing, to his great surprise, instead of one of the friends of Don Luis, the major-domo of the Fernandez del Valle household, in his picturesque Mexican dress. Removing a silver-laced *sombrero*, the man presented to him a large, square envelope, sealed and stamped with the family crest.

"You will wait for an answer?" Ingraham inquired, much astonished at such a mode of communication.

"No, señor," the man replied. "Don Luis has left the city. He departed with all the family early this morning for his hacienda in Michoacan, leaving directions only that I should with my own hand deliver this letter to you. There was nothing said of an answer. I have the honor to bid you good-day, señor."

Ingraham hardly noticed his departure. His words had so filled him with astonishment that he tore open the envelope in haste and drew forth the enclosure. He found these words written on the sheet within:

"SEÑOR,—

"It was my intention to have sent you this morning a friend who would arrange with you time and place for the conclusion of a meeting in which we were unhappily interrupted last night. But cooler consideration has brought me to a decision, in which I hope you will acquiesce, to avert the scandal which would follow our meeting in Mexico, by arranging that it shall take place elsewhere. I leave this morning with my family for Las Cruces. I shall be absent for a length of time barely sufficient to go there and myself return to the capital, when I shall at once send a trusted friend to learn from you at what place—the farther the better—you will meet me. Hoping that I am not mistaken in trusting thus to the sense of honor of the man whom I once held as a friend, and whom I cannot conceive to be a coward as well as a traitor,

"I am, etc., etc.,

"LUIS FERNANDEZ DEL VALLE."

"Well, Señor Don Luis Fernandez del Valle," said Ingraham, smiling faintly over the last words, "you are determined to make it impossible for me to avoid meeting you. Yet I have no desire whatever to kill you, and I certainly do not intend that you shall kill me if I can prevent it. Here at least is a respite, and if I could but find the man who disappeared last night—for it is too much to believe that *he* was a spectre! But I have positively no means of identifying him, thanks to my cursed folly in failing to face him boldly in the Alameda. If I believed that the woman was *Cármen*, I should know well where to find him,"—and his thoughts turned darkly to *Rivera*; "but if it were some one else, what possible clue to his discovery have I? If I could communicate with her, she might learn who of her household was absent on that night. But without such a suggestion, with the fixed delusion in her mind that it was a supernatural appearance, what hope is there of her making any inquiry, any effort to clear herself? And he has taken her to *Las Cruces*!" For the first time the full meaning of this flashed upon Ingraham's mind, bringing with it again the crushing sense of a mysterious, unrelenting fate which had been for a few minutes forgotten. "To *Las Cruces*! That means to hopeless imprisonment, to the fate of the *Marquésa* over again! Well, my task is plain now. I have promised her help, and she shall have it. Nothing short of open insult shall force me to meet this man and risk my life until I have offered her the opportunity to clear herself if that be possible; if not, to seek a refuge where his cruelty cannot reach her. To-morrow I, too, will start for *Michoacan*. If it is fate which has brought us to this point, hereafter I will be my own fate—and hers."

XI.

Not until after he had taken this resolution did it occur to Ingraham to consider how he could, for a time at least, rid himself of the companionship of *Brooke*. Since it was by his own desire and arrangement that they were engaged to leave Mexico together the next morning, there was difficulty in finding an excuse for overturning this arrangement and taking his departure alone. But he was none the less firmly resolved to do so, nor did he trouble himself very much about the excuse which he should make, trusting to the inspiration of the moment when he announced his change of plan. It was noon before he met *Brooke*, it having been long understood between them that neither should intrude upon the other in the morning, but a single glance at the young man's countenance was then sufficient to indicate that something of a disturbing nature had occurred to him also. *Ingraham*, who was by this time in possession of that calmness of mind which is the result of fixed decision, at once perceived these signs of discomposure when the tall figure, pausing in the open door of his anteroom, obstructed the flood of brilliant sunshine pouring in, and forced him to look up from the writing on which he was engaged.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Why should you think that anything is the matter?" *Brooke*

returned, making an unsuccessful attempt to change his expression as he sat down. "I have been very much surprised,—that is all. You'll agree with me that it is a little singular that just when we had valiantly and virtuously made up our minds to put temptation behind us by taking refuge in flight, the temptation should suddenly and unexpectedly remove itself. In other words, the whole of the Fernandez del Valle have this morning left Mexico."

"Indeed!" said Ingraham, with the command of countenance which it is not difficult to maintain when listening to news already well known. "It has not taken you long to discover the fact. How did you learn it?"

"I met Rivera just now and heard it from him."

Despite his self-command, a flash came into Ingraham's eyes. Rivera was the man on whom (if he could believe the woman to have been Carmen) his suspicions rested, and this intelligence roused them at once. But he controlled his voice and manner, though he could not control his glance.

"And how did Rivera acquire his information so soon?" he asked.

"Easily enough. A note from Don Luis to his father stated that urgent personal business called him away, and requested Señor Rivera to make the proper excuses and explanations for his absence. I shouldn't think their legislative duties amount to much, but he is a senator, you know,—Don Luis, I mean,—and so is Señor Rivera."

"Yes," Ingraham assented, saying to himself that this accounted for Rivera's knowledge. Of course Don Luis could not leave his official duties without some formality of the kind, and the elder Rivera, being one of his closest friends, was naturally the person whom he would delegate to make the proper explanations of his absence.

"Was Don Alfredo certain that all the family are gone?" he inquired, after a moment.

"Perfectly certain," Brooke replied. "All, without exception, are gone. The curious thing about it is that there was not a word uttered of such an intention on the part of any one, last night. Don Alfredo and I were both there,—at the Fernandez del Valle house, I mean,—and it is difficult to understand either a reticence so extreme or a resolution so sudden."

"Oh, as for that," said Ingraham, "they might have had some reason for keeping their own counsel, or an urgent message of some kind might have reached Don Luis after your departure. His mother and elder children are at the hacienda in Michoacan, and one of them may be ill. Did you"—he endeavored to make his voice careless—"leave the house with Don Alfredo last night?"

"No," Brooke answered, with a quick glance. "I left earlier than he did. Why do you ask?"

"From curiosity merely. And did not Doña Inés give you even a hint of her coming departure?"

"Not the slightest; and that is what seems most strange."

"It would be very strange," Ingraham agreed, "if the departure had not been, as I suggest, unforeseen and unprepared for. Now, what

shall we do? It seems hardly worth while to fly from a temptation that, as you remark, has removed itself. So perhaps you may wish to remain longer in Mexico, although its principal attraction has departed."

"I was about to propose something of the kind," said Brooke, with a little hesitation. "I don't like to leave Mexico so abruptly; that is, I think it would be agreeable to prolong our stay a little. You haven't any particular desire to leave, have you?"

"N—o," replied Ingraham, hesitating in turn. "I am quite willing to remain longer, if you don't mind being left alone for a few days while I go off on a sketching-tour. I haven't done any work of the kind for some time, but the man who wouldn't feel his artistic impulses roused in Mexico must have no artistic impulses at all. No doubt you'll be able to amuse yourself very well without me, and I don't think it would amuse you at all to accompany me."

"Oh, there'll be no difficulty in amusing myself," Brooke replied.

"Where do you think of going?"

"To Toluca, I think. I have long intended to do some sketching in that lovely valley. I shall be over there for a few days, and then on my return we will settle our plans definitely."

"Very well," replied Brooke, so readily that it appeared as if, for some reason, he found this proposal rather a relief than otherwise. "When do you think of going?"

"There is no reason for delay. Since our departure is deferred, I shall take this afternoon's train for Toluca."

It was not at Toluca, however, but at Acámbaro, where the railroad to Morelia connects with the main line of the Mexican National, that Ingraham left his train that night. He disembarked, the most irreproachable of *gringo* travellers in manner and attire, but when he appeared the next morning the landlord of the hotel where he had spent the later portion of the night opened his eyes in astonishment. The *gringo* was transformed into a Mexican, exact in every point of national costume. Tight-fitting breeches of dark cloth, short, braided jacket, folded *zarape* laid across the shoulder, broad *sombrero*, all was perfect, even to the pointed shoes and the nicotine-stained finger-ends.

"Ah, señor," the landlord could not refrain from saying, "you are a complete Mexican this morning."

"It is a very convenient dress when one is going out into the country, and enables one to avoid remark in places where foreigners are seldom seen," Ingraham replied, carelessly.

His adoption of the dress had been for this purpose, as well as to avoid recognition in Morelia. It was hardly possible, he thought, that after three years any one there would remember his face sufficiently to know him in this semi-disguise. He was careful, however, not to go to the same hotel where he had stayed before, and he did not register his name for the few hours he remained.

The next day found him again in Pátzcuaro, where he learned, by apparently casual inquiry, that the Fernandez del Valle party had passed through on their way to Las Cruces. His plans for his own movements were all carefully made, and he now proceeded to put them

in execution. From Pátzcuaro he obtained an Indian canoe to convey him by the lake to Tzintzúntzan, the village famous in ancient times as the Tarascan capital of Michoacan, and as the primitive see of the saintly and heroic Bishop of Quiroga, while in degree, at least, it is famous in modern times from the remarkable romances that certain travellers have woven about the noble "Entombment" of Titian which is preserved here, treasured jealously by the people, not from superstitious reverence, nor yet from any knowledge of its artistic value, but because it is associated with the memory of the great bishop (having been sent to him by Philip II.), to whom they owe a debt of gratitude which after the lapse of three centuries they still pay in undying love and reverence.

Having during his stay at Las Cruces made an excursion across the valley to this village, Ingraham knew that it was not very far from the hacienda, and selected it, therefore, as his point of approach. Thence he passed over to the neighboring town of Iguatzio, and after much trouble succeeded in obtaining there a mount,—a very sorry horse which he purchased outright for the sum of twenty dollars. Thus equipped, and gratified to find that his Mexican dress protected him from the curious observation which in remote districts follows a foreigner, he set forth, turning his face inland, and crossing the valley toward the blue, well-known outline of the hills which rose above Las Cruces, and which, like friendly sentinels, seemed beckoning him from afar.

XII.

It was dusk in the chapel of Las Cruces by the time the Evening Rosary was finished, but the candles lighted upon the altar for Benediction threw their soft radiance over the kneeling groups on the pavement beyond the altar rail,—groups composed chiefly of women with draped heads and delicate brown faces uplifted toward the centre of the radiance, of many children, and of a few men who had dropped in at the end of their day's toil to lift their worn hands in touching supplication toward "El Santísimo," as the Mexicans call the Sacred Host.

Among these men was one who knelt like the rest, but withdrawn as far as possible from the light of the candles into a shadowy corner formed by one of the lesser altars which in Mexican churches are generally placed along the sides of the nave. From this dusky nook he could, himself unobserved, scan closely the figures and faces around him, and he had soon after his entrance perceived the person whom he sought. Carmen was kneeling near the rail which divided the sanctuary, from the body of the chapel, and the radiance from the altar fell full upon her face, framed in the black drapery which surrounded it. While strikingly noble and lofty, there had been nothing very spiritual in the character of her beauty since its development; but, observing her closely now with that keen artist glance which perceives so much, Ingraham was struck by the fact that her face seemed lifted into a higher beauty than it had ever possessed before. Like fine carving in

ivory, the exquisite outlines of her features showed in the midst of the severe black folds which shrouded her; under their level brows her eyes burned with a sorrowful splendor, and her nobly-cut mouth was set in lines of proud yet pathetic endurance. Seen thus, she might have been painted for some wronged queen who had carried her majesty and her sorrows to the cloister.

Little, besides that face, did Ingraham observe during the progress of the services. The shrill, sweet singing of the boys who formed the choir floated unnoticed around him, and he heeded nothing that went on until, the Benediction over, the sacristan began to extinguish the candles on the altar, and the people to rise and move toward the outer door. He remained quietly in his corner until almost every one had left the building, only a few dark figures remaining here and there scattered over the pavement in the obscurity which was now lighted only by the lamps hanging on each side of the sanctuary, when he rose, and, moving forward, knelt again near a side door through which he knew that Carmen would go out, since it led directly into the court of the house. Here he waited, secure in the fact that she must pass close by him in order to leave the church.

It was necessary, however, to exercise some patience in this waiting, for it was long before she moved. At length she rose, drew still closer around her the black mantle which enshrouded her,—just such a mantle as that figure had worn which Ingraham followed through the moonlit streets of Mexico,—and crossed the church, with a grace as incomparable as it was unconscious, toward the door by which he waited. Having taken thought of every detail, he had placed himself where he knew that she would pause at least an instant beside a stone basin containing holy water. He was not mistaken. She paused, so close to him that her draperies touched him, and as she dipped her fingers into the water he breathed rather than said, in the lowest possible whisper,—

“Do not speak, nor look at me, but take the paper which I will put into your hand.”

She started at the first sound of his voice, but retained her self-possession perfectly and blessed herself with one hand while with the other she took the paper which he slipped beneath her mantle. He felt her fingers close upon it, then her draperies swept by him, the door opened at her touch and closed again behind her.

In order to avert any possible suspicion, he waited a little longer in the church, then rose, and passed down the shadowy nave into the outer air. There was a faint stain of color yet visible in the western sky, but the stars were shining above, as he stepped through the doorway and felt the chill touch of the Mexican night. Drawing his *zarape* closely up about his face,—for he did not wish to be recognized by any of the servants of the house or laborers of the estate,—he turned sharply from the church door and took a path across the fields by which he had come, and which led at a distance of a mile or so into the *camino real* (highway) that passed through the lands of Las Cruces to a town distant a couple of leagues.

It was a very small town, a collection of the usual adobe dwellings

around a deserted-looking plaza and a picturesque old church, and Ingraham's lodgings therein were of the most primitive description,—a room in a *mason* (which may be said to resemble an Oriental khan more nearly than any other conceivable house of entertainment), and food of a more eatable quality than might perhaps be imagined, taken at a *fonda*. But he was not only of the material of which good travellers are made, since he was able even on ordinary occasions to treat personal discomforts with contempt, but on the present occasion comfort was something to which he did not give a thought. The one idea which possessed him and directed all his actions was to be near Las Cruces,—that is, near *Cármen*. Everything else was subordinate to that; and as he now walked rapidly along the high-road in the clear starlight, seeing on each hand, beyond the stone walls which bounded his way, the wide fields and pastures stretching away to the hills outlined against the deep violet sky, his heart felt almost light, so much was he relieved to have succeeded in his first attempt to communicate with her. Before this, no doubt, she had found an opportunity to read his letter, and knew that she was not left helpless and alone, but that one willing to serve her in any extremity was near and waited only her bidding to aid her. It seemed to Ingraham as he strode along through the vast, silent world of outspread plains and heights, delighting in the fresh cool air which was reviving as wine to his fevered and jaded faculties, that he was as one who followed a path marked out for him by a fate inevitable and beyond his control. All his surroundings, all the influences of this remote, primitive world in which he found himself, came to the aid of that deep fount of superstition which exists more or less in every nature, but especially in the imaginative and artistic. By ways which they knew not, by acts for which they owed no responsibility, both *Cármen* and himself had been brought to this point, whence their road would lead—whither? He did not ask, nor did he form a plan. A great sense of calm had taken possession of him in the belief that his actions would be directed to their destined end. All that was within his power had been accomplished when he laid his service at the feet of the woman whose life he had so strangely touched and affected. The rest was with her—or with the fate that had first brought him within the shadow of Las Cruces.

The next evening found him again in the dusky church, beside the holy-water font. Again he watched the beautiful pale face in the light of the candles, the dark, luminous eyes full of sadness, the proud, sweet mouth set in its lines of pain. The knowledge of a friend, a deliverer if she chose, near at hand, had not wrought the change in her aspect for which he had hoped. More than ever she looked like one who, wronged but majestic, asked consolation only from God for the injustice of man. She did not once turn her head nor suffer her eyes to stray in the direction where he had told her he would await her answer to his letter, but neither did she keep him waiting as, unconsciously, on the evening before. When the services were concluded, she rose at once and moved across the church toward the door near

which he knelt. One glance of her eyes met his as she paused to take holy water, and in the same instant extended her hand beneath her drapery. It was a moment's work to meet it with his own and receive a folded paper. No sooner had he taken this than she passed on and the door again closed upon her.

Ingraham did not permit his impatience to make him forget any precaution in leaving the church, and it was not until he was a mile at least from Las Cruces that he paused in a sheltered spot, and, by the light of one or two of the wax *cerillas* which, like every smoker, he carried, read what was written on the paper that had been given him. It was but a few lines:

"With a grateful heart I thank you for your desire to aid me," Cármen had written, "but you can do nothing for me. Only God can make my innocence clear. I beg that you will go away, for your presence here exposes us both to great risk, and would be regarded as a proof of that which has been unjustly charged against us, if it were known. So go, I beseech you, go at once; and may God go with you."

That was all. The tiny taper burned down to his fingers; he dropped it and stood in the starlit darkness asking himself what he should do. Go! He almost laughed aloud at the idea. Go, and leave Cármen to her fate, to the isolation, the imprisonment, the cruelty, perhaps, that awaited her? He swore a great oath in his heart that he would never do so. She was not only a creature in need of help,—sore need, he felt convinced,—but she had upon him a claim deep-rooted in the destiny which had made him her discoverer, almost her creator, in the fate that controlled them both like blind atoms, and in every pulsation of the heart that had been hers since the first day he looked upon her. Go! Not until he had spoken to her face to face, not until he had offered her all that he had resolved upon, not until with her own lips she told him that she preferred captivity to freedom, and pain to such happiness as might yet be hers!

And so, though sensible of the risk which he incurred, the next evening saw him again kneeling in the shadowy church. It was his only way of approaching her, for he had no messenger whom he dared trust. But, aware that, even if he was not recognized, the presence of a stranger could not but be remarked in this hacienda chapel, he determined not to appear in it again. He had therefore prepared a letter, in which, after assuring her that nothing would induce him to go until he had obtained a personal interview with her, he said that, in obedience to her wishes, he would not come again to the church, but that every evening would find him in the *huerta* behind, where he should wait in the hope that she would be able to meet him or else convey some message appointing a time and place of meeting. "Run no risk," he said, in conclusion, "but remember that I shall be there *every evening at dusk* until you come or send me your commands. The only command I shall not obey is the command to go without seeing you."

With this missive ready in his hand, he again waited her coming by the holy-water font. As she approached after the services were ended, he observed that her eyes sought the spot where he knelt, as if

in apprehension of his being there, and when she perceived him there was no mistaking her glance of keen reproach. But she did not refuse to take the letter which he slipped into her hand, as she paused beside him for a moment, and then, as upon the other occasions, passed on and left the church without another glance in his direction.

XIII.

It was with a renewal of the now familiar sense of being in the grasp of a destiny over which he had no control that Ingraham found himself again in the well-remembered *huerta* of Las Cruces,—the *huerta* where Carmen had once met him, where for a few brief moments he had fancied she loved him, and where Don Luis had stepped between them. How that unforgotten scene came back to him as he stood once more in the spot where it had taken place, the spot where everything was as unchanged as if he had left it the day before, where, indeed, half a century might pass and make no change! Yonder rose the stern, fortress-like walls of the old house, around him were the shaded walks overhung by fruit-trees, and before him was the *glorieta*, with its brimming basin, and its stone seats gray with age. Everything was so absolutely the same as on that past evening, even to the color still lingering above the western hills and the sweet sound of singing from the chapel, that he almost asked himself if all that seemed to have occurred in the interval had not been a dream and he was not *now* waiting for the Carmen of the past to come and hear his story of love?

But these fancies soon faded under the stern considerations of reality. Would Carmen, the Carmen of the present,—not a girl free to be wooed and won in all honor and nobleness, but a woman bound by iron bonds of duty, a misjudged and unhappy prisoner,—venture to meet him? He hardly dared hope that she would be able to do so on the first evening. It would probably be some time before she could make an opportunity to leave the house unobserved. No matter. He had promised that whenever she came she would find him awaiting her, and, if it were necessary to wait for weeks instead of days, that promise should be kept. He hoped, however, that the period of waiting might not be too much prolonged, for he knew well the danger he ran in every visit to Las Cruces,—danger of inquiry and recognition,—danger more grave even for her than for him. Had it been foretold to him that he would ever find himself in such a situation, lurking in disguise in another man's garden, like a lover in a melodrama or, far worse, a spy, he would have laughed in incredulous scorn. But now he scarcely considered the misconceptions which would attach to him should he be discovered, or gave a thought to the personal danger that menaced him. Still less did he think of the romanticism of his position or its extravagance in other eyes. Little as his life had prepared him for anything of the kind, the day of trifles was over with him and the day of realities had come. Passion in its deep sense and original meaning—

not the perverted meaning in which the word is too often used—had seized him in that strong grasp which leaves no room for thought of anything save the two great things which it represents,—suffering and sacrifice. For as no true passion ever existed without its throes of suffering, so that does not deserve the name in which the thought of self is not annihilated. To noble heights of endurance and of achievement, not to depths of baseness and self-seeking, does passion, God's greatest force in the soul of man, lead those who are able to feel it. And such passion was now in this man's heart,—passion in which self was set aside in the thought of another, in the ardent desire to serve one whose life, overshadowed by darkening fate, seemed interwoven with his own, and who had neither helper nor defender save himself. In what light of quixotic folly his intentions would be regarded by those whose love is low as their faith in all that lifts humanity above the brutes to which it is akin is small, he did not for one instant trouble himself to reflect. The modern world, its standards and its scepticisms, its mockery and its littleness, was very far removed from this life which was a survival of other ages, this remote wilderness of Nature, this primitive simplicity of man, that made a setting for the drama of his fate.

And of *Cármen's*. For, let it be said again, it was of her alone that he thought as he paced the walks where the evening shadows were momentarily deepening; never losing sight of the fountain-filled space over which dusk and starlight mingled, nor of the walk which led from the direction of the house, and along which, if she came at all, she would appear. But he had so schooled himself to the anticipation of disappointment, so settled in his own mind that she would not come on this first evening, that it was with a start of surprise, an almost suffocating bound of the heart, that he suddenly saw her approaching.

For it was herself. There could be no error this time. Shrouded though she was in her black mantle, the incomparable grace of her movements and the superb dignity of her bearing could not be mistaken.

There was about her no air of one who came to a secret tryst, no furtiveness of glance or stealthiness of movement. Composedly as if she had been a queen going to her presence-chamber, she passed along the walk and into the open circle, where she paused and glanced around. As she paused, Ingraham emerged from the shadows on the farther side and came toward her. They met by the fountain, and, as he silently but with a bearing of infinite respect bowed deeply, she held out her hand in the gesture with which one welcomes a friend.

"Señor," she said, and her clear tones fell like music on his ear, so grave and sweet were they, "I am sorry that the day should have arrived when I cannot say that I am glad to see you at Las Cruces. Instead I must ask, why have you come?"

"I have come," Ingraham answered, "to serve you, if you will suffer me to do so."

"And how," she said, with the same grave sweetness, "should you be able to serve me? There is no way: I have told you that. And by your presence here you do both yourself and me great wrong, and expose

us both to great danger. For, because I believe in your desire to serve me, because I believe that you are truly the friend of one who is a wronged and unhappy woman, I have come here to meet you, to thank you for wishing to defend me, and to bid you go and leave me in the hands of God. I have done this at the risk of more than my life, at the risk of such misconception as makes life a thing of little worth. And since I could give you no higher proof of my gratitude and my trust, I pray you now to go."

It is impossible adequately to express the infinite dignity and the exquisite gentleness of these words. They were such as made Ingraham in his heart thank God that he had harbored no thought or desire which would have rendered him unworthy of such trust, which would have made him bend his head before her, a shamed, dishonored man. Instead, he looked into the dark eyes which even in this obscurity were such wells of soft light, and answered with the haste of one who feels that his time for pleading may be short.

"You do me no more than justice," he said. "I have come at every risk because I believe I am your only possible defender. Can you tell me that you do not need a defender? Has not the fate of the *Marquésa* fallen upon you? Has not the man who so unjustly judged you from mere appearances also condemned you to imprisonment here, even as she was condemned?"

"It is true," she answered, quietly. "And if part of her fate has been mine, why not the rest? I was foolish to dream that it would be otherwise, that I could take her place and know only the happiness and brilliancy of her lot without tasting its bitterness. I understand better now. The rest of my life is to be spent like hers in the dark shadow of loneliness and shame. Well, the *padre* says that I must not think of it as fate, but as the will of God. So be it. Fate, or God's will, it is fixed,—I know now that it has always been fixed,—and there is nothing for me but to endure with the courage which it may please God to give me. And so, again, señor, I pray you go!"

"And leave you to such a fate?—to the helplessness that makes such a fate possible? Never!" cried Ingraham. "I will die upon your threshold first! This is a wilder delusion than that which made you wreck your life and mine—for you wrecked both, *Cármen*—when, because of your fancies about that infernal picture, you turned from me to Don Luis. What can I say to you? Do you not see that if you are suffering the fate of that woman, it is only because her story suggested to Don Luis first to doubt and then to condemn you in the manner he has chosen? But if she was powerless, you are not. I am here to offer you the power to make your own fate, or to fulfil that which I believe has been ordained for you. I am no more certain that I live than I am certain that I was brought back across half the world for this purpose,—to do you a service which, as I was strangely moved to tell you when we first met after my return, I owe to you as a right."

"You owe me nothing but some pain, I fear, which when I gave it I was too young and ignorant to comprehend," she replied, sadly. "But since you will not go without farther words,—though every minute increases the danger of discovery for us both,—tell me at once

the nature of the service you offer, that I may fitly thank you, if I may not accept it."

"You *must* accept it!" he returned, almost fiercely. "You must leave this captivity which is a wrong and an outrage to you! I will make every arrangement for your escape, and place the most ample means at your disposal, if you will leave this place and take your life into your own hands."

There was a moment's pause—a moment in which her lustrous eyes were bent upon him as if she would read not his face alone, but his inmost soul—before she said, slowly,—

"And then, señor? What would you propose that I should do then?—after I had left my home, like a guilty rather than an innocent woman?"

"Rather like a woman too secure in her innocence to submit without appeal to insult and condemnation," he replied, quickly. "Once free, go where you will,—to your father, if you can trust to his protection; if not, to Mexico, where you must have friends,—and prove your innocence to the man who has so harshly judged you. Do not fear that the slanderous world shall have any opportunity to connect your name with mine. I will never approach you; I will even leave the country if you desire, although it concerns me as well as you that the charge your husband makes should be disproved. But, as God hears me, it is not of myself that I think, but of you, and all that I ask is to be allowed to set you free,—I, who had more than any other to do with the fate that has bound you! Here you can do nothing; you are helpless under injury and false accusation. And if you should escape without my aid, you would be helpless still, for you would be without means. And gold is the talisman that opens all doors. Once I hoped that the wealth with which I am burdened might have opened for you all the doors of life. Instead, it can only open the door of your prison. But you will not deny me this privilege. It is all I ask,—to give you freedom and the power to demand justice. Let me do this, who have been able to do no more!"

In the passionate earnestness of his pleading he had taken her hand in both his own and bent toward her, speaking eagerly. *Cármen* made no effort to withdraw her hand. For one passing instant she had doubted him, but now, standing wrapped in grace and dignity as in a garment, she answered, with the grave gentleness of her first manner,—

"I do not know, señor, why you should give so much thought to my poor fate, unless it be simply from the greatness of your kindness. But, since it is so, let me thank you best by perfect candor. You offer me, with a generosity which I should shame myself if I doubted, the power to leave this which you truly call my prison. But does it not occur to you that I should also be leaving my home,—for home and prison both it is to me,—and should I not thus appear to establish the truth of the charge made against me? For innocence does not fly. Flight is for guilt; and no act of mine shall ever sully my name and that of my child by acknowledging myself guilty of that of which I am accused."

"But how will you clear your name if you allow yourself to be hopelessly imprisoned here?" Ingraham asked. "Do you not see that cruel wrong has broken all bonds of duty? For the sake of yourself and of your child you should leave this prison, which is no longer a home, and take steps to discover and to prove who was the woman who entered your garden in Mexico disguised as yourself."

"Who was the woman!" she repeated, and he saw her shiver slightly. "Ah, who could it have been but *her*—the Marquésa—whose fate I must follow and whose cup of bitterness I must drink!"

"Great God!" he exclaimed, in dismay,—for who can reason against delusion?—"do you still entertain that wild fancy? Do you not know that it is superstition—madness——"

"Is it," she interrupted, "greater superstition, greater madness, than to believe what you cannot deny, that you and I, both innocent, have been drawn nevertheless into the exact reproduction of that ancient tragedy? Remember the scene upon which I came that night when the clash of swords drew me into the garden, and tell me, if you dare, that any merely human agency could have brought such a thing about?"

"It was strange," he admitted, "but not so strange as you think. For, whether or not the event was the result of some fate which we do not comprehend, the circumstances were certainly brought about by human agency. Have you never wondered how I chanced to be outside your gate on that fatal night? Do you not know that the folly and imprudence—nay, worse—which brought me there constitute another reason why I claim the right to help you? For I did you a great injustice——"

"What?" she demanded, in a quick, imperious voice, her eyes growing larger and more luminous as they flashed upon his own through the deepening twilight.

"I followed from the Alameda," he answered, slowly, "a woman whom I took for you,—for *you*, do you understand me? How can I ever sufficiently atone to you for that? But she deceived me, as she deceived your husband, by her likeness to you. And she was no shadow, no ghost of the dead. She was living, she was with a man whom I was mad enough not to identify when I might have done so, and she entered your gate. I was in the act of following her companion, who walked rapidly away after parting from her, when Don Luis emerged from the garden and encountered me. He had seen her, and he met me: what could he think?"

"He might have thought," she answered, proudly, "that it was easier for circumstances—nay, for his very eyes—to deceive him, than for me to do so. But he had no faith in me, was ready to believe the worst, to charge me with a crime the mere suspicion of which is the last insult to a woman! And you, too, señor,"—she had drawn her hand from him now, and stood erect before him, a noble and majestic figure, whose glance he could not meet,—"*you*, too, believed me capable of falling to such depths. What act had I ever committed, what word had I ever said, that you should have done me such grievous wrong?"

He felt crushed beneath the poignant keenness of her reproach. "No act or word of yours ever belied you," he answered. "It was my own madness,—the memory of the portrait, and the old accursed story——"

"Ah!" she interrupted, with a quick gesture of hands clasped over her heart, "it comes back ever to the same thing,—the portrait! Say what you choose, my fate is fixed. I, *Cármen*, may be what I will, but, like her,—that woman whose image I am,—I must bear always the stigma of having done evil and incurred disgrace. Even you, the one friend on whose faith I might have thought I could rely, to whom I have ever spoken out the inmost thoughts of my heart, even you believed it of me! What hope, then, that any other will do me justice? And, this being so, all that remains for me is to bury myself here, in what is a shelter from scorn as well as a prison, until God shall send me relief by death from this body which does me such cruel wrong."

She lifted her beautiful face with an impassioned movement toward heaven, as if praying for the swift coming of the release of which she spoke, just as a man's dark figure, which had approached unseen by either, stepped into the open space where such light as yet lingered fell.

XIV.

It was Ingraham who first perceived and recognized this figure. He stepped forward instantly, thus placing himself between *Cármen* and the man who approached.

"Don Luis," he said, quickly, "suffer me to explain my presence here before you form any judgment upon it."

"My judgment is already formed," replied Don Luis, in a voice which indicated that he was holding his fury under control with the utmost difficulty. "What explanation can alter the fact that you *are* here?—that while I hastened back to Mexico to give you the meeting which no man of honor would have dared to shirk, you came here, like a coward as well as a traitor, to meet this false woman and betray the honor of the house that has given you hospitality! I will listen to no words from you, and, if I did right, I should kill you like a dog. You have forfeited all claim to be met as a gentleman on equal terms. But for my own sake I will not be guilty of the dastardly act of killing an unarmed man. Defend yourself. If you have no weapon, here is a sword I have brought."

But Ingraham drew back from the offered blade. "No," he said, resolutely, "you cannot again force me into a combat which has no reason to justify it. I have done you no injury. If I had, I would freely give you the utmost satisfaction one man can offer another. But I beg that you will hear me and learn why your wife has consented to meet me."

"It is unnecessary to tax your ingenuity in falsehood," replied the other, bitterly. "The fact speaks for itself. It was in this very spot

that she met you secretly once before, and I—I was mad enough to trust her after that, and give her the opportunity to betray my trust and my honor!" He set his teeth, his eyes gleamed under the dark, bent brows. "Come!" he said, sternly, "defend yourself, or I shall kill you where you stand."

"Luis," said *Cármen*, stepping forward,—and even at that moment *Ingraham* was struck with wonder at the dignity and command of her bearing,—“whether you will hear *Señor Ingraham* or not, you shall hear me. You have charged me with the worst offence of which a woman can be guilty, of dishonoring myself and betraying your trust,—I say nothing of your love, for had you loved me you would, I think, have had more faith,—and of bringing shame upon the head of my innocent child. If I had done this thing I should have deserved all that you have said of me, for I should be a traitress to every duty and every obligation of my life. But I solemnly swear, in the presence of God, that I am innocent, and I demand of you the opportunity to prove my innocence. *Señor Ingraham* has come here—at the risk of his life, as he well knew—to tell me that you found him at your gate that night in Mexico because he had followed through the streets the woman whom you saw enter, and whose strange resemblance to me struck him as well as you. Neither you nor I made any effort to discover that woman,—you because you had no doubt of my guilt, I because I thought the form had been only an appearance. But now I believe that the woman you mistook for me is a living woman, and I ask of you the simple justice of aiding me to find her.”

There was a moment's silence, for while she spoke it was impossible even for the furious man before her to resist the compelling influence of her voice and manner, which breathed alike the simplicity of perfect truth and the loftiness of a soul proudly conscious of its own integrity. But this effect was brief. When her clear tones ceased, the reaction of passion in the mind of *Don Luis* was stronger perhaps for the momentary impulse toward other thoughts.

“You cover the blackness of your heart and of your conduct with a hypocrisy which might deceive an angel!” he cried, turning upon her with a concentration of rage under which a weaker though as innocent a woman might have shrunk. “If this man—of whom you speak truly when you say that he has come here at the risk of his life—knew that it was another woman whom he saw on that night, why did he not then say so, when the truth of his words might readily have been proved? And was it necessary for him to come here, in disgraceful secrecy, to tell you what he should rather have told to me, whose right it is to clear your honor, were such clearing possible? Let me hear no more of your falsities. If you have not the courage to avow your guilt, be silent! And go—if you do not wish to see me kill your lover.”

“That,” she said, solemnly, “you shall not do. While I live, you shall not kill an innocent man whose only fault is that he has placed himself in peril to serve me.”

“To serve you!” repeated *Don Luis*, his fury now bursting all bonds of control. He turned to *Ingraham*. “If you do not wish me

to think you coward enough to shelter yourself behind a woman," he said, "you will take this sword and defend yourself."

"Señora," said Ingraham, addressing Cármen earnestly, "I pray you to leave us. I promise you that I will not fight your husband if I can avoid it, for I think that when we are alone he will see that it is but just of him to listen to me."

"How can I leave you?" she asked, wildly, for the first time losing her self-command. "The old tragedy will be repeated. He will kill you, and your blood will be on my head!"

"On your head it *shall* be, shameless woman!" cried Don Luis, maddened by her words and her solicitude for Ingraham's life. As he spoke, he lunged straight at Ingraham with his sword. The action was so rapid, and Ingraham was so entirely without any means of parrying the thrust, that he would undoubtedly have been run through had not Cármen with lightning-like quickness flung herself before him. The lunge was straight and deadly, with all the power of a strong wrist and an infuriated heart behind it, and the blade passed through her body.

Of the instant that followed, Ingraham had little recollection afterward. It did occur to him to wonder dimly why he had not turned and slain the man who had done the fatal deed, but at the moment he thought only of the woman who had given her life for his, and who without a sound sank backward into his arms, as the swift steel that had pierced her breast was withdrawn.

With a great cry Don Luis dropped the sword and sprang toward her. "Cármen!" he exclaimed, in tones of keenest anguish. "Cármen, thou knowest I never meant the thrust for thee! Oh, God!—she is dead!"

But she was not dead. As he spoke, and as Ingraham endeavored to stop the blood pouring from the wound with the folds of her mantle, she opened her eyes.

"The priest!" she gasped. "The priest! And bid him—bring—witnesses."

Witnesses that she had been murdered, both men thought she meant, but Don Luis uttered no word of protest. Since Ingraham was supporting her and holding back the red tide on which her life was passing away, it was for him to go. He rose to his feet—for he had dropped on the ground beside her—and turned, when—what was this? What should bring two dark figures emerging from the dusky alleys and hurrying toward them? Even as he perceived them, one cried out sharply in English,—

"My God! we are too late! He has been killed!"

"Brooke!" exclaimed Ingraham, recognizing the voice and lifting his head in what at another time would have been amazement.

But before Brooke could reply, the man accompanying him—who had paused in terror at sight of the dark group by the fountain—rushed forward with a startled cry and fell upon his knees beside the figure which Ingraham supported. "Mother of God!" he gasped. "It is *la niña*—it is Doña Cármen herself!"

"Miguel," said *Cármen*, faintly,—for it was the faithful major-domo of *Las Cruces*,—"go for the *capellan*, and bring him quickly. Let him not delay an instant; and return thou with him when he comes."

"*Si, señora, si!*" the man cried, springing to his feet and flying with the speed of a deer down the shadowy path which led to the apartments of the *capellan*.

Meanwhile *Brooke* had seized *Don Luis*, whom he met face to face. "If you have murdered my friend," he cried, fiercely, "you shall answer to me!"

"Your friend?" repeated the other, in a voice that could hardly have been recognized as his own. "I tried to kill him; but, instead, I have killed my wife!"

"*Dofia Cármen!*" cried *Brooke*, in horror-stricken accents. He fell back, loosing his hold of the other, and at that moment *Cármen* spoke again.

"Who," she said, "is this?"

"It is I, *señora*,—*Brooke!*" replied the young man, bending over her. "Ah, great God, what awful fatality! But this wound—a doctor——"

"It is fatal," she said, stopping him. "I feel that it is. A doctor can do no good. But I am glad that you are here, *señor*. God has sent you—in time."

"In time?" he groaned, bitterly. "Oh, had I but come an hour sooner! I do not know how this terrible thing has come to pass, but I fear that it has been the result of something which occurred one night in Mexico. And if so—if so, how can I ever forgive myself?"

A hand fell on his shoulder. The next instant he found himself dragged to his feet and again facing *Don Luis*. "What do you mean?" asked the Mexican, hoarsely. "Speak—if you do not wish me to kill you! What do you know of that night in Mexico?"

"I know that a fearful mistake was made, of which I am in part the cause," the other answered. "I have only lately learned of it, and I have not lost an hour in hurrying here to tell you that the person you saw enter your garden that night was not *Dofia Cármen*, but her sister."

There was a moment's pause, for *Don Luis* seemed struck dumb, and it was *Cármen* who breathed rather than said, "*Inés!*"

"*Inés,*" answered *Brooke*, turning again toward her. "Oh, what can I say of the folly which has led to such a tragedy as this! It was only folly. She said that she was tired of being watched and restrained, that she wished to be free like an American. We had played at love-making, and that night she told me to come to the garden gate, where she would meet me for a few moments, as she had several times done before. When we met, it was I who suggested a moonlight stroll, never dreaming that she would consent to go. But she was in a mood of wild recklessness: she declared at once that she would go, and when I hesitated, suggesting that we might meet some one who would recognize her, she laughed, pulled her mantle closely over her head, and answered, 'Then I shall be taken for *Cármen*. Do you not know we

look alike—behind? God forgive me that I laughed too, for the serious thought of such a possibility never occurred to me. She insisted on going as far as the Alameda. It seems that you"—addressing Ingraham—"followed us from there, and that *you*"—to Don Luis—"saw her enter the garden on our return. As for me, I left her at the gate and hastened away, knowing nothing of the events which followed, although I was very uneasy when I learned the next day that you and all your household had so abruptly left town. But I dared not make even an inquiry, fearing to betray her, and it was not until I received a letter from her, urging me to silence, since she had been seen but 'fortunately had been mistaken for her sister,' that I knew it to be my instant duty to tell the truth. I went to your house, señor. I learned there that you had just left again for Morelia. I coupled this with Ingraham's mysterious absence,—for Doña Inés also told me in her heartless letter that I had been mistaken for him,—and I hurried here as fast as I could travel, fearing some purpose of a hostile meeting. That I have come too late is so terrible that I shall not lift my hand to defend myself if you kill me, as you have killed *her*,—this noble and innocent lady!"

But of vengeance, even on one who had been the indirect cause of such awful wrong, Don Luis had now no thought. He turned and sank upon his knees beside his wife with a cry which those who heard it never forgot. "Cármen!—Cármen!" he said, in agonized tones, taking her passive hand and covering it with kisses. "How I have wronged thee! Oh, my heart's life, forgive me, forgive me! Blind and mad that I was, how could I doubt thee! Oh, my love,—my love whom I have murdered,—say that thou dost forgive me, miserable man that I am!"

Ingraham had thought ever since her utterance of the word "Inés!" that, if not dead, Cármen was so near death that she would not speak again, for her weight upon his arm, her head upon his shoulder, had grown more heavy, and it seemed to him that her breathing had well-nigh ceased. But the poignant agony of the appeal now poured into her ear might almost have called back the spirit which had passed beyond the things of time,—and hers was still lingering on the border between life and death. Again the dark eyes opened and the faint lips stirred.

"*Gracias á Dios!*" she murmured. "The truth is known, and my child will bear no stigma of shame. Forgive thee, Luis? Yes, with all my heart. Thou wert misled; but if thou hadst believed me—Ah, that is a poor love which has no faith. But do not grieve over this—accident. It was but an accident. And it is best so. The fatality is accomplished now; and it is better the sacrifice of my life than that of an innocent man."

"And art thou not innocent, my Cármen,—my Cármen!" moaned the unhappy husband.

"The priest!" said Ingraham aside to Brooke. "For God's sake, hasten the priest!"

But even as Brooke turned, though with no faintest idea where to go, steps and voices were heard approaching, lights gleamed, and a

minute later a tall, spare man in a *soulane*, followed by several figures, came hurriedly up to them. Even in this moment of horror, Ingraham was struck by his composure,—the composure of one long accustomed to tragic scenes. He did not ask a question; one glance at *Cármen* was enough, and, making the sign of the cross, he began at once to give the absolution for the dying.

But at the sound of his voice, full of solemn melody as he spoke the familiar Latin with his Spanish accent, *Cármen's* eyes again unclosed. And now she roused herself as she had not roused herself yet. Evidently she had reserved her strength for this effort.

"Father," she said, interrupting him, "I have something to say which cannot wait. Listen to me first. I am dying, but I wish to tell you—you and all here—that it is by accident alone I have been killed. My husband had no thought of injuring me, but I flung myself before his sword, and it pierced my breast before he could withdraw it. Remember that I swear this,—I who will soon be in the presence of God. And the *Señor* Ingraham will tell you that I speak truly. Do you understand me?"—her voice grew weaker,—"*I swear—*"

"I understand you, my child," said the priest. "All who are here have heard and understood you. Have you anything else to tell me?"

"Nothing, I think," she answered, faintly. "So now the absolution—quick!"

He was not too quick in giving it. As the last words left his lips, *Cármen's* spirit passed away.

THE END.

EFFACING THE FRONTIER.

WHEN Thoreau, sick of civilization and weary of men, went forth into the woods in willing exile, he carried an axe with him. This brought upon him the taunt that his renunciation of artificial life was not complete, since the implement so essential in his segregation was a finished product of the very conditions he decried.

Another philosopher,—Natty Bumppo,—unfettered by the theories of "book-larnin'," went straight to the mark. Cooper tells us that Leatherstocking retreated before the sound of the woodsman's axe, until in "The Prairie" we find him on the frontier, aged but invincible, and turning a bold front to the inevitable pickets of modern progress.

Thoreau was an eccentric actuality, Leatherstocking an invention of romance. Yet more than once in some by-path of the Great West I have come face to face with the physical embodiment of the idea that impelled both these men to solitude. I might easily name you the Western counterfeit of Thoreau, and you would recognize the name as that of one not unconnected with councils of state and the philosophy styled transcendental. But a more realistic figure is intruded. He voluntarily forsook the delight of his own loneliness to bear me company, one day, in a long ride through the Bad Lands; and, though it is ten years ago, the voice of that weather-beaten old wanderer speaks in a spirit of prophecy, and I hear him say,—

"Young man, the West is peterin' out mighty fast. I've prospected, an' punched cows, an' druv stage, an' turned my han' to mos' everything, from the Pan Handle to the Hills; an' I tell you the end's a-comin'. I generally move on a bit when the price of a hair-cut gets below fifty cents; an' that's why I'm movin' on now."

At the time I suspected him of flippancy, his hair was so very long; now I know him for the seer that he was. That unsurveyed boundary, "the frontier," had become a wavering line; to-day it is all but effaced, and the man who "goes West" is not quite certain of his destination till he reaches the Pacific and receives the puzzling assurance, "Oh, no, we don't call ourselves Westerners in San Francisco. The West is further east,—in—in Denver and Deadwood, you know."

There have taken place in 1894 some changes which unfailingly indicate the frontier's obliteration and suggest an adjustment of the Eastern point of view. In September last the Honorable Secretary of War, Mr. Daniel Lamont, put in effect an army order which if announced informally and in paraphrase might take some such form as this: "Ladies and gentlemen of the Atlantic seaboard and Editors of the Eastern Press, you will please observe that in consonance with the new policy of army concentration it would be advisable to modify the terms of alliteration commonly in use among you with reference to that part of our country lying beyond the Missouri River. The West is no longer Wild and Woolly, but Peaceful and Pastoral. Indian

warfare is practically over; but you may have noticed that the anarchist and the striker have come to dwell 'in our midst.' It has been decided, therefore, to abandon some of the Western posts and reduce others in the friendly Indian country, transferring the troops to Washington, New York, and other centres of advanced civilization, which are yet comparatively unprotected in times of lawlessness and disorder."

What, in fact, was brought about by these September army orders? Certainly the most radical changes ever known in the history of "frontier" defence. The companies of troops stationed east of the Mississippi were increased in number from one hundred to one hundred and nineteen,—the West being the loser. Eight companies were contributed by the Department of Dakota, four by Colorado, and seven by the Department of the Platte, to swell the roster of troops under General Howard's command. Less than three-fourths of the regulars remain in the West, so that about an equal proportion of soldiers to square miles of territory is now maintained.

When the order was issued for abandoning certain posts, the Western newspapers in the various vicinities were black with mourning headlines prophetic of Indian outbreaks, while press despatches from the same quarters conveyed to the country at large the unexpected tidings of encounters and imminent uprisings. A military post is a commercial and social factor of much consequence to any Western community, and protests against abandoning it are natural. Nevertheless it was decided to dispense with Fort Marcy at Santa Fé, Fort Bowie, Arizona, Fort Supply, Oklahoma, Fort Sully, South Dakota, and Fort McKinney, Wyoming. Fort Bowie's two companies had been retained until further trouble with the Apaches seemed unlikely. The peaceable Pueblos and inoffensive and distant Navajoes were not considered such menaces to the safety of Santa Fé and Albuquerque and their neighborhoods as to justify Fort Marcy,—especially as Wingate, Logan, and Bliss are within call of assistance. Reasons of the same nature held good in deserting McKinney and Supply.

But this was not all. From Washington came the word that that mild-mannered gentleman, Geronimo, had experienced such a change of heart during his imprisonment in Alabama that his release from captivity and return to the Southwest were under serious consideration. Arizona was up in arms at once; the neighborhood of Fort Sill was similarly agitated when later advices reported Oklahoma as the destination of the Apache chief. As a finishing touch, there was even definite rumor that this leader of the Chiricahuas had so far forsworn murder as a fine art that he had become a Sunday-school superintendent during his absence in the South, and would exercise his religious proclivities as an example to the lawless whites of Oklahoma. Yet why not? There is record that several of the worst Modocs who escaped hanging in 1873 were sent to St. Augustine, where their hearts became good and they were regarded as "models of industry and exemplary behavior;" that six years of captivity transformed the excitable disposition of Steamboat Frank into a state of gentleness which led him to become a minister of the Modoc church on the Quapaw reservation. But it was only ten years ago that Geronimo was engaged in peaceful

agricultural pursuits in Arizona, and a year later that he raided the Southwestern settlements until General Miles effected his capture and spirited him away to Florida, without waiting for permission from Washington. Arizona has not forgotten the raid, nor the circumstance that one of the Apache prisoners escaped at St. Louis and made his way back home in safety.

There is still another incident of 1894 which justifies the title of this article. I refer to Mr. Lamont's decision that the Indian scouts are no longer needed. It is my impression that the history of these auxiliaries of our regular army is still unwritten. They are mentioned in the reports of Western campaigns, but I fancy the real nature of their services is little understood; nor is it generally recognized that their formal discharge marks a distinct epoch in Indian warfare. It is almost an announcement that for the first time in the history of the West a general war with any tribe of savages has become a remote consideration,—a conviction much better founded than that of Governor Safford, who in 1875, after Crook's campaign, was tempted into predicting that there would be no more fighting with the Apaches.

To General Crook belongs much of the credit of utilizing the wild Indian as a scout,—of making an ally of him against his own tribe; for, though the friendly redskin had already served Uncle Sam in this way, it remained for Crook to demonstrate fully his capacity and to show the ease and completeness of the conversion. The general's reputation as an Indian-fighter was well earned. He was a man of resources and original methods; and it is interesting to note, in passing, some early expressions of his character. Crook was a green country boy reared on an Ohio farm. General Schenck, whose several West Point *protégés* had turned out badly, took a fancy to him because of his studious habits, and got him his appointment as cadet. It happened that the boy's father was too poor to pay his son's stage fare from the Ohio farm to the Hudson: so young Crook gladly embraced the opportunity to help drive some hogs to Philadelphia, whence he was able to buy river transportation. After his graduation from the Point he was stationed in Oregon at a time when an army lieutenant's pay was only sixty dollars and would barely support him. Crook accordingly turned hunter, and sold the game at a profit which enabled him to live as an officer and a gentleman. His company of foot-soldiers was at a disadvantage in the numerous conflicts with little bands of unruly Indians; but Crook defeated the savages, captured their ponies, and gradually mounted his men. It was thus he learned woodcraft.

It was in June, 1871, that Crook took command of the Department of Arizona. In 1872-73 he subdued the Coyoteros, Tontos, Yampais, and Hualapais in a series of brilliant campaigns which put him in the first rank as an Indian-fighter. His remarkable success must be largely attributed to his skilful use of Apache scouts. On the principle of "set a thief to catch a thief," he adroitly employed the Hualapais and White Mountain Apaches in particular against their own flesh and blood; and in the management of the army scouts throughout the West this idea was afterwards adhered to whenever

practicable. General Crook exercised a singular control over these wild followers. Without parallel, I fancy, was his custom of making scouts out of the captured hostiles he had only just subdued; and they served him well, too. He did not always take the field when there was need of bringing in some particularly bad Indian. There were occasions when he simply notified his scouts that the head of a certain arch-conspirator was wanted at the fort; and in a reasonable time this direct evidence of death would be produced. I have it on excellent authority that an Apache has been known to bring in the head of his own father when acting under instructions from General Crook. Yet these extreme measures were justified by circumstances, and have not in the least detracted from the general's reputation as a fighter who knew how to be merciful. "He was not an exterminator," says one historian. "His policy was to subdue the Indians and then treat them honestly."

The Indian allies served Crook well to the last. Their familiarity with the country and their peculiar fitness for overcoming on foot its most forbidding obstacles brought to a successful close more than one campaign whose end was uncertain. After the first hard fighting which followed the San Carlos uprising in 1873, the hostiles joined the cavalry in slaying Cochinar, Chuntz, and Chen-Deisi. It was an Apache scout—"Peaches" by name—who guided General Crook to the Chiricahua stronghold in the Sierra Madre after the McComas murder. On this occasion there were but fifty-one officers and troopers in the command, while the Apache scouts numbered one hundred and ninety-three.

You will find the Indian ally figuring prominently in nearly all the wars with the hostiles since 1871. The government authorized the employment of five hundred of these scouts. Already the Pimas of Arizona had effectively aided the troops as scouts and guides; for the Pimas themselves frequently whipped the Apaches in their encounters with them. The friendly Pawnees, too, had dashed with General Carr into the Dog Soldier camp at Summit Springs in Eastern Colorado, and aided in the rout of Tall Bull and his band; while the prowess of the Delaware remnant had long since justified the honors bestowed upon them in fiction. In the Modoc war it was sixty Warm Springs Indians under Interpreter Donald McKay who bravely tried to succor Captain Thomas's command when surrounded in the lava-beds. It was one of these scouts, acting with Colonel Perry's cavalry, who struck Captain Jack's trail, thereby effecting the capture of that redoubtable redskin. Colonel Carrington, commanding officer at Fort Phil Kearney, had been authorized to enlist fifty Indian scouts on cavalry pay and allowances, and to his neglect to deploy them may be largely attributed that ignorance of the hostiles' numerical strength which brought about the pitiful slaughter of Fetterman's command on the ridge near Peno Creek. But that was in the sixties. Eight years later we note the presence of sixty scouts on Custer's exploring expedition into the Black Hills, and in the great Sioux war of '76 the Indian scout was an established adjunct to the army. We fought the valiant Nez Percés with some of their own people, and there is even official testimony of the services of the Cheyennes,—the meanest Indians in the Northwest.

Yet the scouts could be treacherous, too; and there is on record an instance of their treachery which will bear relation here, since it is connected with some other details of Indian behavior which have perhaps escaped the public prints. The fight itself excited much attention at the time, for it was followed by unfounded reports of massacre at Fort Apache, and by an official inquiry.

Late in the summer of 1881 two comets blazed in the sky. Somewhat earlier, when only one was visible, Nock-ay-del-klin-ne, medicine-man of the White Mountain tribe, paid a visit to General Eugene A. Carr, commanding officer at Fort Apache. There was trouble brewing. The medicine-man did not deny that he had been raising the dead. He had raised them as far as the knees; but further than that they refused to emerge until the white man had left the country. Nock-ay-del-klin-ne would make a noise like a bear, and the dead would answer him. They said the white man would go when the corn was ripe; that the coming winter would be a hard one, with six feet of snow. In response to the general's incidental inquiry as to who had made the comet, the medicine-man acknowledged himself as its creator.

Nock-ay-del-klin-ne took his departure; and some weeks later, when his suppression was deemed necessary and he was sent for again, he would not come. So on August 29 General Carr set out to take him. The command embraced two troops of the Sixth Cavalry and twenty-four Apache scouts under Lieutenant Cruse, together with the usual packs. The scouts had not been acting well, and their arms were taken away; but on the forty-mile march to the home of the medicine-man on Cibicu Creek their guns and ammunition were returned. General Carr assured them that he made the second comet, which had now joined the first in the heavens; and so, with confidence restored, the medicine-man, next day, was taken without much ado from his *jaal*-house on the banks of the Cibicu. The command was going into camp on the other side of the creek, and Captain Hentig had uttered "U-ka-sha!" ("Go away!") for the benefit of some Apaches who were pressing about the tents. Then Sanchez of the Carissa Creek band gave a war-whoop, the scouts opened fire, and Captain Hentig fell dead. The treachery proved unfortunate for the captive Nock-ay-del-klin-ne. He was speedily converted into a good Indian while trying to escape; and afterwards some soldier cut off his head, so as utterly to preclude the fulfilment of his promise that if killed he would come to life again in four days. The Indians, it may be added, were beaten off, and the troops stole away in the darkness to the succor of Fort Apache.

This treachery was afterwards avenged by the capture and hanging of the Apache sergeant, Dead-Shot, and two other leaders; but the mutiny did not affect the employment of the Indian scouts. It had always been the custom to escort them with a detachment of regulars, and the precaution was almost invariably a check upon any temptation to rebel. In the shock of actual conflict with the hostiles a deterring hand was needed to suppress the savage fury of the Apache scouts; for then they would butcher without compunction the women and children of their own nation. More than one commanding officer has

felt the sting of Eastern reproach when non-combatants have fallen in some fierce fight. Perhaps no one deplored it more than himself, or more keenly regretted that the scouts were so beyond control when their blood was up. Yet this excuse has been met with the answer that the government has no right to engage demons as allies: so doubtless the discharge of the scouts is welcome news to many in the East who have smelt the battle from afar and proclaimed it an offence to their nostrils. At the time of Mr. Lamont's decision there remained but one hundred and fifty of the Indian scouts, representing an annual expense to the army of fifty thousand dollars. The others had been gradually replaced by the Indian cavalry and infantry, whose short period of enlistment has not yet yielded an occasion for a test of their efficiency as fighters.

Is it exaggeration to say that this army concentration, the return of the civilized Geronimo, and the discharge of the scouts, mark an epoch in Western evolution? I think not. Certainly they are of significant interest from what the New-Yorker has been pleased to call "the occidental"—*anglicé*, Western—point of view. The two coincident circumstances of Geronimo's release and the scouts' discharge were in themselves of import enough to impel this editorial expression by a leading Western journal:

"It means a great deal to the American people. It signalizes the termination of all feuds with the red man, for one thing. It means, for another, that the United States government has got all it can possibly hope to get from the uncivilized tribes, and that hereafter no war of persecution or prosecution will be allowed. It means that there will be no more war in the West, and that the Indians are henceforth to participate in the citizenship which makes this government the best and greatest beneath the sun."

Does it really mean so much? It is a bold prophet who unequivocally declares that we shall war no more with the Indians; yet such are indeed the signs. "What the 'peace policy' could not accomplish has been accomplished by onward civilization," wrote Mr. J. P. Dunn, Jr., in 1886. And in his valuable work on the mountain massacres he shows how our conflicts with the Modocs, the Nez Percés, and the Northern Cheyennes, with the Sioux in 1876, with the Chiricahua Apaches since that date, with the desolating band of Victorio even, were all caused by ill-considered, unjust, and arbitrary attempts to remove the tribes from their natural homes.

Those were the days of Indian rings, rascally agents, and criminal blundering by the Indian Bureau. To-day such corruption is less possible; millions of dollars expended and thousands of lives sacrificed have helped us to a more intelligent treatment of the nomadic tribes; we are not nearly so eager to demonstrate our theories at any cost. The problem has been further simplified by the appointment of army officers as agents whenever circumstances permit. This plan is one of comparatively recent adoption, yet twenty-two of the fifty-seven agencies in the United States are now under the conduct of officers whose authority, discipline, and military standard of honest dealing exercise a much-needed moral force.

With the degree of civilization which the Indian may attain under the new dispensation this article is but incidentally concerned. It is easier to indicate how he is becoming eliminated along with "the frontier" as a factor antagonistic to Western progress. Sheer necessity is forcing him to farm. In the time when he roamed at will it was Schoolcraft's estimate that eight thousand acres in a wilderness state were necessary to support one Indian by the chase. Appalling, is it not? when to-day we witness the farmer's steady encroachments upon the twenty-five acres allotted to each cow and steer in the ranch country. "Non-reservation Indians," says the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in his latest annual report, "realizing the fact that the unappropriated public lands are rapidly disappearing, are making efforts to find lands which may be secured as their homes. Whites have settled everywhere and circumscribed their territory; they are hemmed in on all sides, and must adopt the ways of civilization or perish."

A little study of the United States map west of the Missouri may be made with profit by any one who would see the situation clearly. What tribes of warlike Indians remain, and what is their attitude towards the whites? In the Northwest we naturally turn first to the Sioux,—the great Dacotah nation which once lorded it from middle Kansas to the British possessions and from the Lakes to the Rocky Mountains. In Nebraska on the Bluewater General Harney had taught them a severe lesson as early as 1855; and in the ensuing decade we find them driven to closer quarters until in the Minnesota outbreak of 1862 Dakota becomes their boundary-line. A rapid survey of their history during the last thirty years affords an instructive object-lesson of civilization's inevitable forces; though the arms of Uncle Sam were not always victorious. Twenty years were required to wrest from them the Powder River country and the Black Hills and to force them into the confines of their present reservation in South Dakota. The first attempt ended in the inglorious failure of 1866, known as the military occupation of the Powder River country; the second was the war of our Centennial year, in which Custer fell fighting half the Sioux in Dakota. The gentlemen at Washington had blundered again, and the military census of the Indians at the four agencies showed twenty-six thousand less than were reported there by the Bureau. Thenceforth there was peace till the Pine Ridge campaign of recent memory,—the last of the Indian wars, it may prove to have been.

The outbreak was not a general one, and was marked by half-heartedness and inconspicuous leaders. Hostilities—so the report went—had been made possible only because of the lingering belief of the more youthful bucks that the Sioux were more numerous than all the white people on earth. That idea was long ago abandoned by their elders, and now the younger generation is learning the truth. The Sioux are turning travellers and discovering what a very small part of the earth's surface is represented by their reservation. During 1894 alone a large number were taken East and to Europe for exhibition purposes. Thirty-five Indians from the Rosebud reservation accompanied "Pawnee Bill" to the Antwerp Exposition; "Buffalo Bill,"

whose savages of the Wild West had already made Rome howl, was given leave to take one hundred and twenty-five Indians from reservations in North and South Dakota and Oklahoma, many of whom were Sioux; and "Buck" Taylor filed a bond for the good treatment of twenty-five redskins from the Rosebud reservation, for general show and exhibition purposes. It is further noted that ten North Dakota Indians and their families were escorted to the Atlantic seaboard "for the purpose of showing the transformation from savagery to civilization, and for the further purpose of disposing of articles manufactured by them." Still another enterprising American was allowed to pick a team of Ponca Indians to play ball in the Eastern cities. It was expressly stipulated by the government that all these savages escorted from "the frontier" to the land of civilization should be protected "from immoral influences and surroundings."

These excursions are of serious importance as a means of showing the Indians the folly of warring with the government. The Navajoes, for example, were long convinced that they outnumbered us, because according to their tradition seven Navajoes and only five whites emerged from the underworld. Their remaining doubts were effectually dispelled through the visit of fifteen of their representative men to the World's Fair. One of these Navajoes has since been reported as saying, "I was asked by an ignorant Indian from Cotton-Weed Wash if there were more white men than Navajoes. I showed him the dust and grass, and told him I could just as soon try to count the white people; that they lived on the water as well as on the land. Then he sat down and wanted me to tell him all I saw. I told him I could not if I talked till I was gray."

The eighteen or twenty thousand Navajoes, by the way,—though rivalled in numbers by the Sioux and Choctaws alone,—have long ceased to be regarded as an element of possible disturbance, despite their painful poverty on an eight-million-acre reservation. It cost the government much blood and money to subdue them; for one hundred and eight years they had fought the Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans. But the subjugation was effectual, and since their five years' exile (1863-68) in the Bosque Redondo on the Pecos they have been included with the truly good Indians on the continent. Occasionally the country is informed through press despatches that the Navajoes threaten trouble, and troops are sometimes sent from Fort Wingate to the San Juan. But the local inhabitants smile, and say that the hay and honey on the river farms seem to be plentiful this year, and that Uncle Sam is a good paymaster.

These (the fraction of Navajoes not in Arizona) and the nine thousand industrious Pueblos are New Mexico's only Indians, if you except less than a thousand Mescaleros, living peaceably on their reservation on the south. History takes account of but one uprising of the Pueblos against Americans,—the massacre of January 19, 1847, at Don Fernandez de Taos, when Governor Bent and others were murdered at the instigation of the Mexicans. We are horrified, of course, when they hang witches at Zúñi for much the same causes that actuated the pious people of Salem; but even this ancient custom is becoming

obsolete since the display of military force at the Pueblo village three years ago.

When we cross the line to Arizona the situation becomes more serious. In these days of novel insurance risks it would yet be a bold enterprise for some company to offer Arizona indemnity, at so much premium, in the event of an Apache outbreak. Yet even Arizona has been free from Indian wars since the surrender of Geronimo eight years ago,—a period of tranquillity unequalled in the history of the Territory. Was ever any such country in the world settled in the face of such obstacles? Is there anywhere to be found a more telling instance of civilization's irresistible march? From the Mexican war to 1886 there was scarcely breathing-time between fights. The one continuous Apache war from 1861 to 1870 alone drew more than forty million dollars from the national treasury. In 1867 a commission had reported the loss of twenty thousand lives and the expenditure of five hundred million dollars chiefly in wars against the Apaches and Navajoes. That it costs the government a million dollars to kill an Indian is not sheer extravagance of statement, after all. But, excepting the converted Geronimo, the great chiefs have long since passed away. Mangas Colorado, Cochise, Victorio,—their raids are ancient history. The Ishmaelite "Kid"—uncaptured at last accounts—is less a menace to public peace than are the anarchists of Chicago and New York. The Pimas and Maricopas on the Gila, the Papagos at San Xavier del Bac, the Mojaves and Yumas in the Colorado River region, have long since passed into the category of innocent curiosities. The Atlantic and Pacific Railroad has broken the line of the frontier in Arizona, and the oases of irrigation are fast appearing. Now the tourist is taking possession of this land of wonders, and penetrating by easy stages to the Colorado's Grand Cañon,—“the unique achievement of nature.” He carries a kodak, and the Indian flees before him. By the end of the century he will overrun Arizona, as he already enjoys Colorado, old Mexico, and the coast of Alaska. Surely the last dim traces of the frontier are fading in the Southwest.

Look at the map again, and summon up your recollections of Western history as it concerns the savages. It is so long ago since the Indians of the far Northwest were at war. In Washington and Oregon the powerful Klickitats have become a mere memory. The name of the Cayuses has passed to the pony of the plains. Who knows anything about the Klamaths, the Rogue Rivers, the Umpquas? Are the Yakimas in Asia or in the United States? Who remembers that this government once waged a memorable war with the Spokanes, Cœur d'Alènes, and Pelouses? It is many years since peace was broken in the country of the Columbia.

Was there ever a real Indian war in California? Yes, the whites once murdered the Diggers; and almost worse than war was our government's disgraceful treatment of the Mission Indians. And then there were the Modocs of twenty years ago, with a war we did not bargain for. To-day you must look hard at the map to find the remnants of that scattered band.

What other Indians have contended with us in recent times? Save

the dispersed Cheyennes and Arapahoes, none that we can name without a blush. What need to dwell on the scandal of the Lower Nez Percés, our loyal and magnanimous allies, whom we goaded to rebellion and deceived into surrender? They were crushed as only a great nation can crush a brave but petty foe; and they no longer have a place in the possibilities of Indian warfare. The Piegans (Blackfeet), too, are outside the list of the warlike,—have been so ever since we struck them in the Marias valley in 1870 and put them on a Montana reservation where they could not farm. As with the Navajoes, hunger even has not driven them to fight again; and now at last the government is coming to their relief with irrigation canals that were urgently needed ten years ago. Passing by such friendly Indians as the Crows, the Gros Ventres, the Arikarees, and the Mandans, we find in Wyoming only the Wind River Indians, in Idaho the inoffensive inhabitants of the Cœur d'Alène, Lapwai, and Fort Hall reservations, in Nevada a few Indians whose names sound strange in Eastern ears. Nebraska has the Sioux for neighbors; but within its borders are seen to-day no greater savages than those answering to the names of Winnebago, Omaha, Santee, and Ponca. Kansas, once ablaze with war that raged around Fort Larned, now harbors the Chippewa, Munsee, Kickapoo, and Pottawatomie tribes. In Texas we look vainly for the border bands of Kiowas and Comanches. They are peaceably established in the Indian Territory, along with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, the Pawnees, Seminoles, Osages, the five civilized tribes, and the rest. Since Colorado was avenged at Sand Creek in 1864 and the Cheyennes and Arapahoes were driven into Kansas and the Indian Territory, the war-cry has seldom sounded. Once it was heard, when Meeker and his companions fell before the Utes in 1879. Will there be another outbreak of these Indians? Against the recommendation of Commissioner Browning, we are making allotments on the Uintah and Uncompahgre reservations and opening the surplus lands to settlement; of late a new complication has arisen over the alleged rights of white men to sell whiskey to citizen Indians; the situation of the Southern Utes is reported as "anything but encouraging,"—following the injustice already done them.

There is not likely to be another general war with any Indian tribe. In admitting the possibility of a petty outbreak, there is no occasion for urging that the West has not entered on a peaceful era. When a few drunken Indians "hunt trouble" they are said to be on the war-path,—which smacks of fearful carnage; but the East is not charged with relapse into barbarism when news of a Homestead or a Haymarket riot comes flashing over the wires. The slums of Chicago and New York hold greater threats to human life than are lurking anywhere in the West outside Oklahoma. The "holding up" of a train has ceased to be a community distinction. The burglar and the anarchist of the Atlantic States are more dangerous than the cowboy and the Indian as you encounter them to-day. The eruption of human passions is much the same everywhere; neither lynching nor legal neck-breaking has abolished them. The "bad man" no longer abounds in the West: he is showing signs of regeneration in short hair

and mixed drinks. His hoodlum cousin of the big cities is much the greater ruffian.

And so the whirligig of time has brought a reversal of conditions, when the traveller in the Indian country, the farmer in the New Mexico valley, feels more secure than the citizen of the metropolis who trudges homeward on a dark night with an eye to the alleys; when the old inhabitant gazes dreamily at his rusty Winchester on the wall and shudders at the desolating fury of the live wire and the trolley-car. Shooting through the roof is almost out of fashion west of the Missouri (I know at least one Territorial saloon where it is not allowed even on the Fourth of July); riding horseback on a billiard-table is no longer commonly practised by the male society of railroad towns. A large proportion of the standing army has secured a sedentary occupation in the East, and the West is becoming commonplace and agricultural. In short, the frontier is effaced; and the blood-and-thunder novelist of the future who seeks material of "contemporaneous human interest" will go further and fare worse if he leaves the lairs of the New York policeman for the uneventful regions where the war-whoop is no longer heard.

William Trowbridge Larned.

ODDS ON THE GUN.

ADVENTURES OF A WAR-CORRESPONDENT.

"SOME one had blundered."

It lay with the signal-corps of one division or another.

It was in South Africa. We were out in three divisions, to establish a station in the hills, where there was no end of trouble among the natives. They were desperate, and liable to an outbreak at any moment.

So far our march had been utterly monotonous. Some of the boys were growing restless.

Late one afternoon our signal-corps came in with the report that the central was throwing up a temporary fort, fifteen miles away, due east, that the natives were massing to the north and sharp fighting was expected, and that we were to move on for one day more, and then return and hold the new fortification.

There was a general groan among the boys. They did not want to tramp up a hill and then tramp down again, while the central was having all the fun, and then be left to sit around a fort. There was no help for it, however. The order was given to move at daylight.

With me it was different. I was quite as much after lively times as they, and I belonged as much with the central as with the left. The grave question was how to get there.

The major would have given me an escort, but it would have weakened him, and, as the going was my own affair, I decided to go alone. It was only fifteen miles.

The jungle was not so heavy but that I could easily keep my points by the stars, with an occasional peep at my compass.

Natives are not apt to be awake long after dark, even when they are on sentry duty, unless they have good reason to expect something. I was much more afraid of wild animals; but they, too, are not half so dangerous, in reality, as wayward travellers seem to find them.

For the first eight miles I might as well have been going through the woods at home. Then I was suddenly halted by the sharp yelp of a baby lion. He had leaped upon an antelope sleeping in a mossy hollow just beyond. A moment later I should have been out there myself, and if the little fellow had waited he might have found me right in range.

There was a great sound of scurrying feet as the rest of the drove sprang up, but instantly there were two more yelps like the first, two more dusky shadows bounded from the undergrowth, and two more antelopes were detained.

Either a family of whelps had been set adrift by the old folks, or the parents were in hiding, denying themselves, for once, while the youngsters took a sort of kindergarten course in marketing.

I was not anxious to find out which by trying to pass them. There was no need for haste, with only seven miles more to make before morning. I climbed the nearest tree and made myself at home, well up among its branches, looking down upon the open.

I was hardly there when the very air was split by a crashing roar. It shook the forest, and I gave a most cordial clutch to the branch above me. Evidently the whelps' old gentleman or some other old gentleman proposed to help himself, and with a series of squeaking cries the young folks decamped, giving him the field.

That roar was the signal for the forest to wake up. It was echoed from right and left, and, thanking fortune for so favorable a retreat, I made up my mind to stay there till the "still hour,"—the hour before sunrise.

I was not tired enough to sleep well in a tree, at the start, but at last I managed to oversleep, and was roused, not by the roar of a lion, but by the rattle of a native war-drum. There was a hum of voices, too, and the sound of many feet.

A dozen or more native warriors were already in the open space, preparing for breakfast. The drummers were soon in sight, and the main body followed close behind. Soon the open space was thronged with them. There were more than five hundred.

They were all warriors. Some of them were well armed. Natives are usually boisterous. These were so still that in the tree I could not catch a single syllable, though the nearest were but a little more than fifty feet away.

If I waited till they moved on, I should be behind them,—a position which might prove decidedly disagreeable. They were evidently impressed with the gravity of their mission, which without doubt was an attack upon the new fort, and if I could get ahead of them and warn the central of their coming it would not only be a much more comfortable position, but would prove a good feather for my cap.

Their preparations for breakfast, too, made me ravenously hungry, and that settled it.

As cautiously as ever a panther crept, I made my way to a large branch extending back into the jungle and crept out farther and farther till it began to bend. If it broke I was gone; but it did not break. Then I let myself out hand over hand, till my feet were not much above a yard from the spongy ground. Then I dropped.

The branch swung up again with unnecessary noise, but I did not wait to see what effect it had. It was a question of life and death, and I increased the distance without delay.

Faint with hunger, almost ready to drop in the path and die of thirst, thoroughly worn out by a steady race-horse pull of two hours and a half over that soggy, mossy ground, I came in sight of the new fort.

Even then I could not help pausing for a moment to puff and admire it. It stood on the summit of a mound possibly two hundred feet high. The other side was evidently a cliff, with a river beyond it. It was a mound of ragged boulders, with the exception of one comparatively smooth approach, in places not over twenty feet wide, a natural corridor leading to the summit. I even succeeded in smiling as I noticed the cold muzzle of a cannon through a hole in the fort wall, covering that narrow approach, and thought of the possibilities before it.

Strange how still that place was. There was not a challenge or a greeting as I climbed. I was too much exhausted to shout and rouse some one. I was too much in haste to look for an entrance, and, climbing directly over the wall by the cannon, came sliding down the other side fair against a bronzed old English gunner who was sitting there sound asleep. He was the only mortal in sight.

"For mercy's sake, where are the rest of you?" I gasped, staring about in blank astonishment.

He stood up, rubbed his eyes, looked down the path, and replied,—
"Hif you come from the left wing, sir, hi'd better hask where is the rest of *you*?"

He was as much bewildered as I.

By degrees we got our senses into shape for a comparison of facts. He had been ordered to remain with the gun and told to expect the left at any moment, as they had been signalled, the night before, that the central would move on at daylight to a point where the natives were massing, a day's march beyond, and that the left was to hold the position till the central returned. He had the written orders in his pocket for the major. Much good did they do him.

It was only a little confusion somewhere in the signal service. "Too much brevity and a double construction," it was pronounced upon official investigation. The immediate result, however, was that the old gunner and myself were there alone, with at least five hundred savage warriors not an hour's march away, and all the camp luggage and ammunition left for us to guard.

"There's no such thing as calling help, and we can't retreat with no place to go. We might hide somewhere," I said, as a feeler, to find out the temper of the old man.

"An' give hup the gun!" he exclaimed. There was no doubt about where he stood. He laid his rough hand affectionately upon the piece, and added, "Hi tell ye, sir, she's a 'oly terror. She's a powerful one. It's hods on the gun, sir, w'en they come."

"Well, give me a gallon of water and a bone to chew, and I'm with you," I replied.

Before I had half finished eating, we heard the rumble of the drums. The cannon was loaded to do all that was in her. At loops ten feet away, on either side, we collected a dozen loaded rifles each and took our positions there, after placing our hats so that they would just show above the wall, still farther along on either side.

Personally I would much rather have been somewhere else at that moment, even in the monotony of the marching left; but pride, if nothing else, prevented my showing it to that calm old gunner.

The first native to show himself was a fierce black Kaffir, with a long-barrelled, square-butt gun, who came stealthily creeping along, under cover of the rocks, with his eye upon my hat. Two others were creeping close behind.

Crouching on one knee, he deliberately levelled at the hat. It is an indignity which one as instinctively resents as if his head were really where the other fellow thinks it.

The two behind the leader were on a broad grin, watching for the result, when I fired.

The fellow jumped full five feet, and fell on his back. The grin disappeared from the other two, and they started over the rocks; but the gunner settled one of them, and before the other was out of sight I had a fresh rifle and took him in the back.

We waited ten minutes in absolute silence. I should have been willing to wait much longer; but, with a blood-curdling yell, the whole line of undergrowth bordering the mound seemed wriggling with life.

Leaping, yelling, firing, and brandishing all kinds of weapons, a perfect black mass came bounding toward us. Some few sprang from rock to rock, but most of them crowded more and more into the narrow path up the smooth ravine.

It was easy enough then to see the folly of having thought that two of us could hold the place, and, not being so ready as the old gunner to die for a cannon, I heartily wished myself anywhere else in the world.

As fast as we could pick up, aim, and throw away the rifles, we made them do their duty. But what did the few we killed matter in that multitude? They came this time prepared for it. It simply had the effect to turn them from the rocks, where they were too prominent, into the cut.

Their howls were something frightful. In two minutes more our lives would not be worth a broken straw. The whole gorge was one solid mass of fiends.

The old gunner dropped his last rifle and turned to the cannon. He folded his arms across it and looked calmly down the path. One would have thought that he had a whole detachment at his heels, and even then that he was a brave man.

The picture seemed to amuse him. His bronzed face wrinkled in a smile. It suddenly struck me that he was crazy. The black fiends were within fifty feet of us. I was petrified.

"Now then, old girl," he muttered, and, as if it answered his voice alone, there was a crash that sounded like the thunder of a broadside.

How he did it I don't know, but before the smoke had cleared away he sent another, and then a third, charge from that cannon's mouth. Then he folded his arms again, and with the same grim smile leaned upon the cannon and looked out into the smoke, as though nothing whatever had happened since he was leaning there a moment before.

As the smoke lifted he muttered, "Hi told ye 'twas hodd's on the gun, sir. She's a 'oly terror. She's a powerful one."

Powerful! I looked down that ravine, and drew back with a shudder of horror. If I were to try to report the scene, it would not be believed. A squirming, groaning, torn and bleeding mass of human beings filled the ravine. Otherwise there was not a Kaffir in sight.

"I suppose we'd better fill up again," he muttered, after admiring the work of his pet. "There may be more will want a taste. Hi'd be sorry to deprive 'em."

Fill up? By all means. I went at reloading the rifles as eagerly as the old gunner himself. With a thing like that to help us, we could hold the hill against all Africa. If the gunner himself had suggested retreat then, I should have refused to give up the gun.

When all was ready we took our positions again and waited.

"Maybe they've 'ad enough," he muttered; but we watched by turns and waited all day long and all night and all of the next day. Not a Kaffir showed himself.

We did not dare to go beyond the walls till the central and the left came marching back together, having found each other in the jungle, but not a sign of the native insurgents. They found them all, instead, in the ravine, waiting impatiently for burial.

The old gunner received promotion and a life pension, which he well deserved; but even then he "wouldn't give up the gun."

The last I saw of him he was leaning with his folded arms crossed over it, ready to put the "hodd's on it, every time."

A PREACHER.

TO him the impulse of a kindly deed
Was more than any article of creed;
And whosoever chanced his face to scan
Forgot the preacher, but revered the man.

Clinton Scollard.

A YOUNG COREAN REBEL.

ABOUT thirty years ago, there was born to one of the richest and most powerful nobles of Corea a son, and his palace at Seoul was made the scene of festivity and gladness. All the members of his powerful clan and his numerous friends and relations hastened to tender him their congratulations and to predict great things of the boy. The father's heart was proud and glad, for the boy was a beautiful one, strong and healthy, and he no longer had any fear that his ancestors would go unworshipped because of the extinction of his family. Now, the name of this noble was Soh, and he called his son Soh Kwang Pom, a name which was soon to become famous throughout the Land of the Morning Calm.

The life of children in Corea is a very happy one; they have great numbers of toys and games, in which they imitate their elders in keeping house and in almost every adult occupation. In the house they play backgammon and cards, dominos and chess, while out of doors they play the Corean game of football and kite-flying, in which latter they are far more skilful than the boys of America. Then, again, each year they have the great festivals called "The Treading of the Bridges," "The Meeting of the Star Lovers," and "The Mouse Fire," which are something like our Christmas festivals, and all the children have a splendid time. And when the long winter evenings begin they listen to all those wonderful fairy-tales of old Corea, the tale of the enchanted wine-jug, or how the cat and the dog became enemies, the thrilling love-story of You Pang Noo and Uhn Hah, the Corean Joan of Arc, or the story of Hong Kil Tong, the famous robber and patriot.

So the childhood of Soh Kwang Pom was very happy. He grew rapidly in stature and strength, leading all his comrades in their games and learning more in two years at school than most boys learn in five. The older he grew the more he wished to learn, and his father became exceedingly proud of his brilliant son. Time went by, and Soh Kwang Pom had reached the age of fifteen, when one day he picked up a book which had been lying for years, covered with dust, among some old rubbish. As he read he found the book told of a strange land across the sea, of curious people and strange gods, the land of the hated foreigner. And then he knew it was one of those books which had been printed by those horrible men called Christians, who worshipped a strange god and ate children, who many years before had come into the country, secretly and in disguise, and made many converts for their strange god, until, growing strong, they had openly insulted the ancient gods of the land and the most sacred religious rites of the Coreans. This brought down upon them the wrath of the great Tai-wen Kun, the father of the king, who raised up a party against them and smote them hip and thigh, driving their teachers in terror from the land and massacring many thousands. Since that day, he remembered, the Coreans had won two glorious victories over the

mighty ships of war of the hated foreigner; and then he recalled the horrible attempt of the Dutch Jew Oppert to steal the bones of the Corean kings in hopes of gaining the treasure that was supposed to be buried with them.

All this made Soh Kwang Pom devour the book in his desire to find out what manner of people these foreigners were and to learn something of their wonderful civilization and queer customs, forgetting for the time that the law of Corea had declared that if anybody was found with one of these books in his possession he should suffer death. Soh Kwang Pom read on, and reached the end of the book all too soon, and then he read it all over again. What he read filled his heart with a great desire to know more of these strange people, of their government and how they lived, but such a desire was almost high treason in Corea. This made the boy very silent about his discovery of the book, until one day he decided to tell Kim ok Kuen, a youth about his own age and a great friend. Kim ok Kuen was very daring, and did not hesitate to read the book. Together they talked over the wonderful accounts they had read, until the desire to know more about the foreigners seized Kim ok Kuen as it had before seized Soh Kwang Pom, and they determined, in spite of the law and the danger, which indeed made the enterprise more fascinating to them, to obtain more books about the foreigners. This was extremely difficult in Seoul, but they searched everywhere till they found several more books which gave descriptions of foreign countries.

These books they treasured up as if they were so much gold, and passed them from hand to hand, for by this time they had formed a secret society, and quite a number of their friends among the young men had joined them. Their means of obtaining books soon became much easier, as they enlisted into their service some trusty servants and by their aid managed to smuggle the books into the country from China. From these they learned of the United States, of her strange form of government, her railroads and telegraphs, which had a powerful influence in after-years in making the United States the favorite foreign nation among the Coreans. They learned also of the wonderful changes which were taking place in old Japan, how that country was fast throwing off the old civilization and becoming the new Japan of to-day.

Talking and reading about all these strange things soon fired the imagination of Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen, and they determined that Corea should follow in the footsteps of Japan and become a modern nation. They determined that she should no longer be the Hermit nation, in semi-vassalage to China; that they would break down the barriers that separated her from the outside world and make her a great and powerful state. This was a difficult undertaking for a handful of young men, but they went to work with a will and gathered around them more young men, gradually forming a party, until in 1880 they had won to their side many influential men in the kingdom, including several high officers of the government; indeed, the king himself looked upon them with great favor.

The next year Soh Kwang Pom, Kim ok Kuen, and about thirty

others determined to go to Japan to see for themselves how that nation conducted its affairs; but to do this they must have the consent of the king. This they finally gained, but no sooner had the king granted them permission than a great clamor was raised throughout the kingdom, as it was considered a great disgrace to the land that these young men should want to leave it. A band of men some five thousand strong marched upon Seoul, to demand the recall of the young men. To this demand the king was forced to accede, and he sent officers to overtake Soh Kwang Pom and his party and command them to return. But they had seen the rising of the storm, and hurriedly left Seoul and boarded a vessel bound for Japan. As they left the harbor, they saw the officers of the king ride rapidly into the town, too late to stop the fugitives, who sailed away to Japan.

In Japan they were received with great distinction, and became favorites of Fu Kuzawa, the great leader in political reform, who was very kind to them and instructed them in the methods which had enabled Japan to emerge from her mediæval condition. Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen became extremely popular among the ruling class in Japan, who looked upon them as the advance guard which was to open up Corea to civilization.

They had been in Japan about five months when a startling event happened in Corea that made the king recall them in haste. There lived in Corea a powerful noble, by name Tai-wen Kun, who was the leader of the Conservative party. He was a man of great ability and very cruel. He hated all foreigners, and had been the leader of the men who massacred some ten thousand Christians a number of years before. This noble had been in disgrace for a long time, until a chance occurred, while Soh Kwang Pom was in Japan, that enabled him to regain his power. The Queen of Corea was a member of the powerful Min family, and had great influence with the king, but, wishing to gain complete control of the king and the government, she spent large sums of money upon diviners and soothsayers, for she was extremely superstitious and desired to gain the good will of the spirits. So much money did she spend that there was none left to pay the soldiers, who had to go without their rations, which so enraged them that they broke out in open murmurs. This was the opportunity for Tai-wen Kun, who led the soldiers in revolt, seized the king, and attempted to poison the queen, who escaped, one of her maids, impersonating her, taking the poison and dying in her place. Tai-wen Kun then attacked the Japanese embassy, but the Japanese were brave men and fought their way through Seoul and then to the sea-coast, where they embarked for Japan. Japan immediately determined to send a large force of troops to revenge the attack upon their embassy. When he heard this, Soh Kwang Pom went to the Japanese authorities to try to prevent them from attacking Corea. The Japanese listened to his arguments, and finally assured him that they would only send the troops to protect the embassy.

Soh Kwang Pom then joined the Japanese, but when they arrived at Chemulpo, the seaport town of Seoul, they found a large body of Chinese troops, who had been brought there by Cho, a Corean noble-

man, to put down the revolt of Tai-wen Kun. Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen immediately saw that if the Chinese once entered Seoul Corea would be in danger of losing its independence and becoming a mere province of China. This caused Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen to protest, and they finally persuaded the Chinese to wait until they could ask the king whether he would let the Chinese enter Seoul. To do this Kim ok Kuen disguised himself as a low Corean and made his way to Seoul; but Tai-wen Kun kept the king so well guarded that it was impossible to approach him. If Kim ok Kuen had been discovered, Tai-wen Kun would have immediately beheaded him. When Kim ok Kuen came back and told of his failure, the Chinese entered Seoul, captured Tai-wen Kun, and carried him off to China, leaving a body of Chinese troops behind to keep order in the city. The capture of Tai-wen Kun by the Chinese enabled Soh Kwang Pom and his friends to return to Seoul, where the king received them with great favor, making Soh vice-president of the Home Department, besides conferring on him a high order of nobility, called Takiyo, which enabled him to be near the person of the king. Kim ok Kuen was also received with high honor and was made vice-president of the Foreign Department.

By this time Soh was twenty years old, and he and Kim became two of the most noted young men in Corea. From one end of the land to the other the people talked of what they had done and of what they were going to do. The old men regarded them with horror and charged them with being traitors to their country, while the literary class and the extreme lower orders of the people were fanatical in their hate for Soh and his party. But he had won the favor of the king, and the young men of Corea were gathering rapidly to his standard, while many of the prominent men openly favored the new ideas.

Soh had been in Seoul but a few days when he found that the Mins, the party of the queen, had sold their country to China, making Corea more than ever a vassal of that country. Soh and Kim determined, if possible, to defeat their purpose, for if the Mins succeeded, Corea would remain for many years longer the Hermit nation. They therefore brought all the influence they could to bear on the king to persuade him to enter into a treaty with the United States which would insure the independence of Corea forever. Commodore Shufeldt, of the United States Navy, was on board his vessel at Chemulpo, a short distance away. So when Soh Kwang Pom and his friends obtained the king's consent, the treaty was made almost before their enemies knew of their object or had time to resist them. This treaty with the United States opened up Corea to the world and threw down the barriers which for centuries had made Corea the Hermit nation. It was a great step in advance, and the future of Corea seemed assured.

The next object of Soh and his party was to gain the command of the army, which up to this time had been commanded by Chinese officers. But to do this they had to train their officers, and some fourteen young Coreans, under the leadership of Soh Che Pil, a relative of Soh Kwang Pom, were sent to Japan to study the art of war. On their return

they were made officers of the Korean army, taking the place of the Chinese officers, thus enabling them to be of great service to Soh Kwang Pom in the revolution that startled Korea in 1884.

Soh and many of the young men of his party always had a great desire to visit the United States, which they looked upon as the greatest of all foreign nations. At last, in 1883, came his opportunity, for the king decided to send an embassy to this country and commanded him to go with it. The embassy came to the United States, travelled all across the continent, and was received by President Arthur. The Koreans were astonished; even Soh Kwang Pom was not prepared to see so many strange things, and when they went back to Korea in the United States ship Trenton they were enthusiastic in their praise of everything they had seen, so that to this day the United States is their favorite among foreign nations. The embassy returned to Seoul June 2, 1884, the whole population turning out to welcome the men who had been across the great water.

The young men of Korea had been working hard while Soh Kwang Pom was in the United States, and when he returned he found that they had introduced the telegraph, established post-offices, steam-printing, newspapers, a police system, and many other things, making a wonderful progress in throwing off the dead weight of the older civilization. But their enemies had not been idle, and Soh found that a powerful party had risen up against his friends during his absence and were plotting their downfall. The first success of the Conservatives was when they got possession of the Treasury; then they replaced the Korean officers in the army with Chinese, upon whom they could rely. Then Min Yong Ik, one of the leaders of Soh's party, deserted to the enemy after having a heated argument with Soh before the king, in which the king decided with Soh, while Min Yong Ik departed vowing revenge. The enemies of Soh and his party were greatly encouraged, and determined to crush Soh and drive him from the kingdom.

It has been the custom of Korea to send a certain amount of tribute to China every year; this tribute was usually guarded by several thousand Chinese troops. The time for the departure of the tribute was drawing near, and Soh Kwang Pom's enemies determined to guard the tribute with Korean troops, keeping the Chinese troops in Seoul; because they knew the Korean troops would favor Soh's party, while the Chinese were just as certain to be on their side, thus placing the government completely in their control. When Soh and his friends heard of this plot against them, they saw that they were doomed if it succeeded, for their enemies would not hesitate to behead or banish them on the slightest pretext. This determined them to make a desperate effort to gain once more the control of the government and to drive their enemies from power.

As night settled down over Seoul on the fourth day of December, 1884, an air of uneasiness seemed to take possession of the city. The women, instead of wandering about the streets between the hours of eight and one, as is their privilege, seemed to stay close at home. The streets appeared deserted, except that here and there in the dark

shadows of the walls might be seen groups of men and occasionally the gleam of some weapon; and as you hurried on you would have the uncomfortable feeling of being watched by eyes you could not see. The only place of gayety was the palace of Hong Yeng Sik, who had been the vice-president of the embassy to the United States. He was giving a grand banquet to all the great men in Seoul; the halls of his palace were brilliant with many lanterns and crowded by gayly-costumed guests. Among these was Min Yong Ik, who had been a friend of Soh Kwang Pom, but who was now his bitter enemy and leader of the Mins. He had been appointed a short time before commander of the right palace guard battalion, whose duty it was to attend all the fires in Seoul. The dinner progressed with all the formality and stateliness peculiar to the Coreans until it reached its height, when suddenly over the quiet city rang the alarm of fire,—the signal for Soh Kwang Pom's revolt. Min Yong Ik rushed to the door, but the next instant he staggered back into the hall, covered with blood and wounds received from a party of young Coreans who lay in wait for him. The American minister caught him as he fell, and the banquet broke up in the wildest confusion.

At the first note of the alarm, Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen, with their friends, seized the king's palace, which is a strong castle in the centre of the city. The portion of the Corean army in the castle joined them and assisted in its defence. To these troops were added a few hours later three hundred Japanese soldiers, who volunteered and did splendid service in the struggle that followed.

Meanwhile, terrible confusion reigned throughout Seoul. The enemies of Soh Kwang Pom's party, taken by surprise, rushed to the castle in hopes of gaining admittance to the king, but were repulsed at the gate and over a hundred of them killed. For a moment the Conservatives, as the enemies of the party of Young Corea were called, were staggered, and they withdrew to gather their forces and wait for the coming of the dawn.

When the sun began to rout the mist that hung over the city, tingeing the crest of the beautiful south mountain in crimson and uncovering in all its rugged majesty the mountain on the north, it looked down on a scene rarely witnessed in these days. The battlements of the royal castle were crowded with troopers of the Corean army, which had joined Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen, while here and there the dark-blue uniform of the Japanese soldiers, who had cast in their lot with the leaders of the revolt, mingled with the gayer costumes of the Coreans. All through the narrow streets of the city could be seen crowds of hurrying men, either seeking arms or hastening to some point of rendezvous, while from the camp of the Chinese were issuing the columns destined for the attack, and the fight had begun in earnest.

Within the walls of the castle sat a council of leaders, among whom were Soh Kwang Pom and Kim ok Kuen. They had just heard that the Chinese troops, to the number of seven thousand, had joined their enemies, and defeat stood staring them in the face, while behind defeat walked the spectre of death, with the bloody axe of the

executioner on his shoulder. One hope, and one alone, remained to them. If they only could get the help of that Island Kingdom across the sea, Japan, all would go right. But whom could they send on such a delicate mission? With one accord they called upon Soh Kwang Pom. "We will hold the castle and keep the king in our power, while you bring the Japanese to our rescue," they said. Soh Kwang Pom accepted the mission, and, disguising himself, hurried to the sea-coast, where, boarding a fast boat, he sailed for Japan. But his hopes were soon to be dashed to the ground, for the Japanese hesitated, and finally refused to come to the rescue of his comrades, as they were not prepared to enter upon a war with China, which would certainly have followed.

Sad and dispirited, Soh Kwang Pom returned, to meet, as he was boarding a vessel to sail for Corea, a number of his friends who had escaped the general massacre of their party in Seoul. He learned that Kim ok Kuen had held the castle of the king against overwhelming odds, hoping against hope and watching with strained eyes the east for the Japanese banners which never came; and on the 7th of December, seeing that he could no longer hold the castle, he told his men to escape if they could, and sought refuge himself in flight. Then followed a scene of blood and horror. One hundred of Soh Kwang Pom's followers had fallen defending the castle; nine hundred more suffered death in the most awful forms, the streets of Seoul running red with their blood. Kim ok Kuen escaped to Japan, where he lived in constant danger of assassination until, as we read in the newspapers a few months ago, he was shot in the back by a man who claimed to be his friend, but who was really employed for that purpose by his enemies. The wrath of the conquering faction was visited upon the family of Soh Kwang Pom with a heavy hand. His father's palace was razed to the ground until there was left no stone upon another. The old noble was cast into prison, where he languished for ten years, while his family was dispersed, many of them suffering the penalty of death. Soh Kwang Pom himself was condemned to death no less than thirty times, but he managed to escape to the United States, where he lived until, in September, 1894, during the progress of the war between China and Japan, the King of Corea recalled him, granting him a full pardon. His exile had lasted ten years.

Such is the story of Soh Kwang Pom, as he told it to me several years ago. It reads more like a tale of one of Dumas's heroes than like the adventures of a lad in the last years of the nineteenth century.

Haddo Gordon.

SELF-CONTROL.

THE river is bound by the ice-king's thong:
Below, the current runs swift and strong.

Grace F. Pennypacker.

MARTHA'S HEAD-STONE.

IN Foundryville, since that ancient hamlet became incorporated with the new and growing town of Loder, the inhabitants, in a fresh access of local pride, have begun to pay more attention to their gardens than they formerly did. Flowers will now rarely be seen jumbled together with vegetables, and the grass of the door-yards is kept cut in emulation of the smooth lawns of Loder.

But this improvement does not extend to the grounds of the Lord's house. That little wooden-corniced brick building stands in a deep meadow of self-sown timothy and daisies, that encroach upon the foot-path leading up to the church door and crowd around the high, unpainted steps.

Apparently it has not entered the minds of the pious Baptists of Foundryville—and there are few there who are not Baptists—to show their religious devotion by keeping neat these sacred premises.

Even the graveyard behind, though not wholly neglected, yet speaks a lack of that reverent care which so touchingly symbolizes ever-living love and memory after grief itself has long lain buried with the dead. The graveyard contains but one head-stone that is more than a plain slab two or three feet in height. This is an obelisk of fine white marble resting upon a pediment of granite.

Naturally, so ostentatious an object in so humble a cemetery would seem to point out the burying-plot of a prominent citizen or family of the village. But this costly and conspicuous monument does not stand in a place of honor. It occupies a remote corner, a lonely, unconsecrated-looking corner, separated from the populous part of this City of Sleep by a dreary waste of weeds. The mound has no appearance of ever having been sodded; if so, the weeds have long since choked out the grass, "the beautiful hair of graves," and now there is scarcely visible an elevation of the earth.

It is only by the inscription upon the head-stone that one can be sure there is anything of human interest underneath.

Half-way up the shaft, sculptured in bas-relief, is a hideous, conventionalized weeping-willow; below, cut into the gray stone of the pediment, are the words

MARTHA'S GRAVE.

In the dead middle of a hot afternoon, an oldish man of medium size, expensively dressed, trod heavily and slowly the wooden sidewalks of Foundryville's main street.

He was the only moving creature visible. The few inhabitants who could be seen lolled in abject attitudes, breathless and pathetic-eyed as captured fishes that have jumped their last jump.

The man was plainly a stranger, for he greeted no one, and glanced

curiously from side to side as he passed along. Yet there was in his manner something less of curiosity than of recognition, or, rather, of reawakened memories. His air was that of a dog that has lost his master and seeks everywhere to get on the track of the beloved scent.

He was singularly unattractive in appearance,—I had almost said ill-favored, but that the word implies a certain degree of conspicuousness; and this man, save by reason of his rich attire, could never be conspicuous anywhere.

You might say of him that he had no personality, so characterless were the outlines of his form, so blurred and tame his features. One thing only in his whole person showed the *individual*,—the line of the cerebellum and neck. This was both strong and delicate, half masculine, half feminine.

The stranger walked the entire length of the rustic thoroughfare, from the point near the old brown flouring-mill, where, emerging directly from the heart of the country, it ceases to be a road and acquires the right to be called a street, to the extreme southern end, where it meets at an obtuse angle Loder's broad, busy avenue of commerce. Here and there had he paused to note some closed-up building once a warehouse or factory, or some weather-worn, decaying house, ill mated with a recent addition meretricious in paint and "gingerbread"; brief looks did he bestow upon the bare, brand-new boxes which a hurrying civilization, more desirous to increase and multiply than to make beautiful, throws up by the score and calls homes; now again he lingered before a house that, from its aspect of rooted repose, could hardly have changed during half a century.

The spot that held him longest, both in going and returning, was down near the Loder end of the village. Here was a large, white house, with a deep-set, latticed porch on one side, formed by an extension of the sloping roof. It stood high above the road, which had formerly run gracefully over the little hill, but which, in accordance with modern ideas, was now being levelled, thus leaving the house perched as on a pedestal, the ground having been cut down abruptly from its very foundations. A rusted plate hung by a single screw to the front door, and the name Pendleton was still legible thereon.

This stranded dwelling wore an expression of fright tempered by resignation. With all its shutters fast closed, it appeared to be musing, and turning its vision in upon itself.

The stranger stood a long time motionless before it, unmindful of the ox-team that worked leisurely carting away the pebbly soil. On his way back he walked around the house, looking it all over, observing carefully every window and door.

Once, rising on tiptoe, he stretched up his arm and touched the stone foundation. It barely came within reach of his finger-tips, but the touch seemed to comfort him. Even after passing on, he would turn repeatedly toward the place of which, save for the bare edifice itself, every familiar vestige had disappeared.

Approaching for the second time that part of the street called, by courtesy and force of habit, the business quarter, he peered into the

few shops that were open, occasionally making a motion as if to enter, but checking himself before his foot had touched the steps.

On a certain corner stood a large frame building. It covered two lots, and the first floor comprised two distinct departments,—the one devoted to groceries and provisions, the other to hardware, house-furnishings, dry-goods, and fancy goods.

This corner held some sort of enchantment for the stranger; beyond it he could not get. He crossed the street, but recrossed it immediately, lingering under the wooden awning of the shop, with its fringe of straw hats hanging moveless in the dead air; he walked on in the direction whence he had first entered the village, but, after going a few steps, turned back and sought once more the corner emporium.

His irresolute movements were not unnoticed. Charley Blizard, the bald-headed, enormously fat young man who all day long sat astride of a tipped-up chair in front of Stimson's hotel, as an advertisement—so people said—of the good cheer to be found within, had watched the stranger as far as he could see him.

Charley was hotel-clerk, bartender, hostler, bell-boy, and dining-room waiter. Yet, with such a multiplicity of offices, he had more flesh on his bones and more time on his hands than any other man in Foundryville. But his intellect was hard-driven. It was obliged to account for every least thing that happened, and when things didn't happen—as was generally the case hereabouts—speculation became even more intense.

To-day something had happened, but, as usual, Charley's mind took the greater interest in the negative aspects of the occurrence. The question which caused a double amount of perspiration to fall from his forehead to the floor of the porch was not, "What does the old fellow want at the corner?" but "Why doesn't he go in and get what he wants?"

When the stranger passed Stimson's for the fourth time, Charley could hold in no longer.

"Pretty hot day," he remarked.

The man nodded.

"Are you looking for some one?" ventured Charley, "or"—suddenly mindful of his duty—"something to drink?"

The man stopped. "No," he replied, in a voice as inexpressive as his countenance. Then, abruptly, "Who keeps the store yonder?—the one with no sign-board?"

"What, on the corner?—the big one? That's Semon's."

"Not Jonty Semon's?"

"Yes, Jonty Semon's. Jonathan M."

"It's his son, then," said the stranger, as if to himself.

"He 'ain't got any son: he's got pecks of daughters, though."

"And his father? was he Jonathan M.?"

"Don't know. Never heard of his having a father; he's lived here this forty years, I guess,—long 'fore I come to town. Have a drink?" Charley asked this perfunctorily, not attempting to stir from his chair. He hoped the answer would be No, and it was. But he also hoped for a little more information.

As the man turned and once more began moving in the direction of the corner, Charley called after him, "Know Jonty, do you?"

"I'm not sure if it's the same one," came back in colorless accents.

This was enough for Mr. Blizard. He now had the key to "the old fellow's" uncertainty of movement, and he went forthwith into a delicious speculative revery. This time the stranger did not loiter under the awning. He walked unhesitatingly into the grocery department, brushing past a young clerk in the door-way without appearing to observe him.

There were no customers in the shop, which at first he took to be entirely empty, but he soon spied through a half-open door in the rear a man in his shirt-sleeves, sitting at a table, writing. The man looked up, and, seeing a stranger, arose. "Isn't there any one there to wait on you?" he asked.

The stranger put out his hand. "I'd know the voice anywhere," said he, "though I wouldn't know you, just seeing you."

Semon stared hard. "I don't know *you*—" he began, "and yet—is it—Henry Best?"

"That's always been my name," replied the other.

Semon grasped him by the hand.

"Hen, old fellow, I'm glad to see you."

The two sat down and looked at one another. They could hardly have differed more. Jonty Semon, spite of his dingy business suit, had a blooming, juicy look; his voice was hearty, being full of inflections and pleasant cadences. That he himself was aware of the contrast may be judged from a remark made later to his wife: "Hen looked like a cadaver laid out in another man's best clothes. Somehow he made me feel twice as alive as usual."

Semon was now the first to speak. "Well, where did *you* tumble from? You're the last man on earth I was expecting to see. How long is it since you left, anyway?"

"I came right on from the West," began Best.

Semon laughed. "You're the same old sixpence, Hen. I remember you always had to answer questions in order."

Best went on gravely: "It's thirty years and over since I left Foundryville. I was twenty-six then; I'm fifty-six now."

"Right you are! and you could add up straight in those days, too. You helped me out of many a mess, when I was first put behind the counter to make change. It don't look much like the old hole, does it? Do you remember those lamps it was my business to fill? I always was spilling the oil on my clothes. We've got gas now, you see; going to have electricity soon."

Best glanced around the large, well-stocked room.

"And here you are yet, Jonty."

"Yes, but I've got up."

"I see you have. Own the whole thing?"

"The whole of it. And I own more than you see here; got a family up-stairs."

"So I heard."

"Oh! you heard, did you?"

"That is, I heard you had some daughters."

"Some?" roared Semon, shaking with laughter. "I should say I had. Wait till you see 'em all set up in a row. But they're nice girls, every one of 'em. Got any sons, Hen, for me to marry 'em to?"

"No, I've no sons," said Best.

Semon watched him narrowly, as if expecting another remark, or perhaps a question, but neither came. Laying his hand on his friend's knee, he playfully rubbed its broadcloth covering. "Guess business has been going well out West," he said.

"Yes, there's good business—in some parts."

Semon smiled. This dull tone and non-committal manner carried him a long flight backward through the years. "I mean *your* business," said he.

"I haven't any business."

"Then where'd you get that watch-chain, old fellow? and those studs? Did you steal 'em? And who paid your tailor?"

"I had business. I've been in several kinds; but I've retired."

"Aha! very kind in Cræsus to come and visit his old friends."

Here Semon paused. He would not be too curious, but he looked inquiringly at Cræsus, who, however, did not appear to be communicative.

"If you were anybody but Hen Best," said Jonty to himself, "I'd say you'd retired on somebody else's money; but you're as honest as you're ugly." Then aloud, "Looks as if pretty much everybody had retired around here, don't it?"

"Yes, I noticed the old foundries are shut up. Where do you get your trade?"

"Oh, I catch all the country-folks, to begin with: they start for Loder, and they stop here. Then I keep first-class stock, and there's lots come up from Loder to buy of me. The rats and moths don't get time to scamper through my things, like they used to through old Hanly's."

"Why don't you move into Loder?"

"Well, I've got the place here; that is, it's my wife's; she had the land from her father. You know"—looking sharply at Best—"you know I married Sally?"

"Yes, I know you did."

"How'd you know it? Been asking questions round town, I see."

"No, I haven't. Things were looking that way when I left. I knew she'd take you."

Semon scowled and jerked his shoulders. The inanity of Best's manner, which the most rousing event had never been known to alter, was of old annoying to him; now it made him positively nervous.

"The old fish!" he said under his breath, "he's got no more heart than a bladder." Then, controlling himself, "Hen, it's a good while after to be talking about a thing that's done, but—I'd like to know whether you've laid it up against me that I took Sally Hanly from you?"

"You didn't take her from me; I never had her."

"But you wanted her,—tried for her. I'm sorry to go raking up old scores——"

Best made a gesture with his hand,—gestures were uncommon with him. "Say what you like," said he; "it won't hurt me."

"Then you must have cared some—once."

"I suppose I did; it's a good while ago, as you say."

"The old fish!" muttered Semon again. He turned the conversation upon other things, talking about different people whom Best had formerly known, trying to draw from him some show of interest. Best appeared to listen, but asked few questions. The town was evidently dead to him, and he to it and to all its concerns. Why had he come back? Semon asked himself this repeatedly.

After a rather long pause, during which Semon speculated whether he should invite his cadaverous friend to supper, Best spoke:

"What's become of Martha?"

"Martha? What Martha? Do you mean Martha Snook? She's married and gone away."

"No, I mean Martha—I can't recall her other name, but she lived at Pendletons'."

"Pendletons'?"

"Yes,—the place they're digging down. She—helped with the work."

"Oh—h! I don't know; haven't thought of her for years. Why, let me see. Wasn't her name Carver? No, Carey."

"Yes,—Martha Carey."

"Why, she's dead."

"Dead."

It was not an interrogation, it was not even an exclamation; the word fell dull and heavy, like one clod of earth upon another.

"Yes," continued Semon, "it all comes back to me now. She died the same year you went away. You left in January, she died in the fall. The way I remember it is by the flood. It rained like sixty when they buried her, and that night both the rivers rose. But how do you come to be thinking of her?"

Suddenly Best leaned forward and rested his head in his hands.

"What's the matter? feel sick?" asked Semon. "Overcome by the heat, I suppose."

Presently Best said,—

"Tell me more,—all about her,—little Martha." The ordinarily dead tones of his voice shook with emotion.

Semon stared. "Why, Hen," he said, speaking more gently, "I didn't know you were sweet on Martha."

"I wasn't; she was sweet on me."

"We-e-ll! I——" Semon checked himself just on the point of adding, "I didn't suppose anybody was ever sweet on you."

He remained silent, not knowing what to say further, when Best relieved his embarrassment by speaking himself.

"I know you think I'm queer,"—his voice still trembled a little,—"but then I always was queer. I don't know what is the matter, but somehow nobody ever seemed to care about me. People have been

kind—I won't deny that; you were always kind to me, Jonty, but you never liked me much——" here Semon would have interrupted him, but Best raised a silencing hand and went on. He had manned himself, and now spoke in his former unimpassioned manner.

"I understand, I think. You didn't dislike me, but you didn't particularly care about me; nobody did—only Martha. She—loved me, and I can't say that about any other woman, or man either. I'm not even sure about my mother; anyway, she loved my younger brother better than she did me. I wasn't made to be loved,—so it seems. But little Martha she thought I was."

"And yet you didn't love her?"

"No. I couldn't, you see. I loved Sally. Sally's the only woman I ever cared for; though I got over that. But it left me without any heart in me, and I could never bring myself to ask a woman to marry me when I'd nothing to give her in return—but money."

Semon laughed. "I guess there's lots would have thanked you for asking them," he said, jocosely. He was much moved by this unexpected glimpse into the romance of "old Hen Best's" life; but he did not wish it known that he was moved. His curiosity, however, was irrepressible.

"How did you find out that Martha cared anything about you?" he asked.

"She told me so."

"What! Martha? little Martha Carey?"

"Yes. If I had been used to having girls fall in love with me, perhaps I'd have seen it without her telling. They say women can't hide that sort of thing——"

"Don't you believe it," interposed Semon. "Sally kept me on tenter-hooks a whole year, making me think she couldn't abide me. But how was it about Martha? Did she really pop the question to you? I never saw anything of this."

"There was nothing to see that a youngster like you could have seen. You were too much taken up watching round for Sally to watch my affairs. She used to come up to the store almost every day to get something or other. Pendletons had an account here, and they'd fill up a book in no time. I guess they didn't treat Martha any too well. She worked hard on board wages. They pretended to dress her, but she went mostly in rags. I didn't give it much thought then, but it's all come back to me since. I didn't pay much attention to her,—no more than I did to any customer; I tried to wait on all alike, but she came oftener than anybody else, and so I got in the way of talking with her while I was doing up her bundles and writing up her book. If no one else was in the store, she'd generally hang about a bit after she got ready to start, as if she felt lonesome for some one to talk to.

"She was a kind of nice-looking little thing,—if she'd been decently dressed; only she was always too pale. I never thought she was pretty but once. That day she didn't seem to want to talk, and she wouldn't look at me. So I made her look,—just to tease her, I suppose,—and then I saw she'd been crying. So I hunted round for something to give her, and I found an old brass belt-buckle that had been lying

about for years. Once, in taking account of stock, Mr. Hanly told me to throw it out, that nobody'd ever buy it. So I gave it to Martha. She took it in her hand, and looked at it awhile, then she looked away, out of the door, and I was beginning to think she wasn't pleased, when she turned and looked at me. Her eyes were full of tears; they seemed twice as big as they really were, and her face was pink all over. I think——" here Best stopped, took out his handkerchief and dusted his hat with it, replaced it in his pocket, and went on in the same monotonous way,—"I think if I'd been used to kissing girls, I'd have kissed her. What did you say, Jonty?"

"Oh, nothing. Go on, Hen, go on."

Semon had said to himself, "The old fish!" but he was, nevertheless, greatly interested.

"I saw she wanted to speak but couldn't,—her tears were too near out. Next time she came in she was very quiet. When I handed her back her book she put a little bit of paper down on the counter and ran out quick. It was a strip torn off the edge of a newspaper and rolled up in a tight wad. It had just these words on it: 'Thank you, Mr. Henry Best.'

"That brass buckle kept her shy for a time, but after a while she got free with me again. One dark night she came in very late to get something. I could see she was dreadfully frightened; she was all out of breath and white as a ghost. She told me a man had chased her: it was when they were building the railroad, and a lot of roughs were about. She was afraid to go back alone, so I told her I'd take her if she'd wait till closing-time, as there was no one but me in the store that night. So she waited. I remember I didn't talk to her much; I was feeling down then; it wasn't long after Sally had said 'no' to me, and I'd made up my mind to go West. But Martha she was very cheery. She helped me put up the shutters and turn out the lights, and when we started out together she put her hand in mine, just as a little child would do.

"It's a good long walk down to Pendletons', you know, and the streets weren't lighted then. Once, when we passed somebody, Martha drew up close to me and squeezed my hand, but I paid no attention to it; I just wanted to get her home safe. Still, I thought I ought to talk to her a little: so I told her I was going away. The next thing I knew she was crying out loud. I tried to comfort her as well as I could, but when I asked her what the matter was she wouldn't tell me. I didn't suppose it had anything to do with my going away: I wasn't used to having folks care whether I came or went. I thought maybe she'd forgotten something she'd get a scolding for.

"After that night she hardly spoke to me, but I didn't care much; all I thought of was to get out of town. Just before I went away she came up to the store,—you waited on her that day, I remember; I was at the desk,—and while she was there I stepped out a minute. When I came back she was gone, but I found another little newspaper wad lying in the ledger that I'd left open. On it she'd written, 'Mr. Henry Best, I love you with all my heart.'"

He paused, then added, "It's the only love-letter I ever got in my

life. I wish I'd kept it." Again he drew forth his handkerchief and dusted his hat. "And so she's dead."

"Yes, dead near thirty years, poor little Martha!"

"You say she died soon after I left?"

"Just about a year. They couldn't tell what ailed her; she just got weaker and weaker, and went off so."

"Did she die at her folks'?"

"She hadn't any folks. Pendletons kept her, because they didn't know what else to do with her."

"Then they gave her a funeral?"

"There wasn't much funeral about it. They put her in a box and sent her off in a wagon to the graveyard. I remember it made quite a stir-up in town. But tell me, did you come all the way back East to hunt her up?"

Best went on quietly, as if there had been no interruption to his story. "I went away and forgot all about her; I was too full of the other. Then for years I lived only to work; I put my whole energy into my work; I thought of nobody except the men I had to deal with. There was a kind of pleasure in that. And I made money, plenty of it. But when I'd made it I didn't know what to do with it. Of course there are public institutions, but they don't care for the one who gives the money; all they want is the money. I wanted to find somebody who'd be glad of it because I gave it."

"So I began to think about Martha, and to wonder if she had married. I thought that if I was able to help her, or her children—but now there's nothing left of her, you say?"

"No," said Semon, "there's nothing left of little Martha except what's in the old burying-ground. Would you like to see her grave, Hen? I guess I can find it." And he jumped up to get his coat and hat.

The two men went out together, taking the direction of the country. As they passed Stimson's, Mr. Blizard watched them with that energetic interest which none but a provincial is capable of feeling in the doings of his fellow-mortals. Semon and his friend turned into a hilly cross-road. "Guess they're going over to Muttonhook," said Mr. Blizard, who, having practised guessing all his life, rarely hit the mark.

The church was in a hollow between two low, rolling hills. In the level light of a late afternoon sun the red and white of its bricks and paint glared with unpleasant vividness. Semon led the way to the graveyard, striding through a trackless overgrowth of timothy grass, now burnt to a brownish yellow.

Passing among the graves, he pointed out numerous inscriptions commemorating persons well known to both of them three decades since, commenting upon the career of this one or of that. Best looked and listened in silence. Coming at length to the farthest corner, Semon stopped and examined the ground carefully, pushing his foot about as if hunting for something.

"What is it?" asked Best.

"I'm looking for her grave. Yes, here it is, down here." And he stooped, parting the high weeds. "There's hardly any mound left, but I can feel it—a little. I'm sure of the spot, for old Franklin, who

buried her, showed it to me. I haven't looked at it, or even thought of it, since, and I guess nobody else has."

Best fell upon his knees and groped amid the grass and nettles for the outlines of the mound, feeling of it from head to foot, as if only so could he assure himself of Martha's death and burial. Then, bending low, he kissed the dry, hot earth.

Semon looked on in amazement. Best caught the look as he arose. "I can't tell you, Jonty," said he, "just how it is I feel about Martha. I never cared for her; I shouldn't have married her; I don't suppose I'd want to marry her now, if she was alive. But, somehow, it's to her, and to nobody else, that my mind goes back after all these years. Not to the girl I loved, who didn't care a pin for my love, but to the one solitary human being who *loved me*." The last words were spoken in a lowered voice, but with a reverent intensity of tone that approached passion.

Semon was silent. He was saying to himself, "And this is the man I called an old fish!"

"You can never know, Jonty," continued Best, "what it is to me to think of that. You were always good-looking and agreeable,—the sort they call popular fellows. As a boy you were, and I can see that it's the same now that you're getting to be an oldish man. You have hardly ever had to seek for love or liking: they came to you. I couldn't have them for the asking. I had respect,—that was all. But when I look at this grave—I remember—" He broke off, his dull eyes glistening with tears. "Jonty, do you believe that perhaps she died—partly—because I went away?"

"It didn't occur to me before," replied Semon, "but, now I think of it, it seems likely. She certainly was never well after you left. She kind of died out, you know. Ah, Hen, old fellow," laying his hand on the arm of the elder man, "maybe I *am* a little ahead of you in some things, but you beat me in this: nobody ever died for love of me!"

Best was still looking down at the unmarked grave. "And here she has been thirty years, poor girl, with never a stone or a mark of any kind over her. Buried like a dog!"

He turned to Semon. "Jonty, it's all I can do for her now, and it's a small return for what she gave me, but I'd like to put up a stone in memory of her. Do you think it would do?"

"I think," replied Semon, deeply touched, "that it would be a beautiful thing to do." He cast a glance over his shoulder at the graveyard, with its rows of straight slabs. "Most tombstones," said he, "have been erected *by* love; yours will be a monument *to* love."

And so there was raised above the poor little long-forgotten grave in the corner of the Baptist burying-ground the finest head-stone ever seen in Foundryville, a monument, as Semon had said, to love, dead love and unrequited in kind, but a witness also to a living emotion so strong and so tender as almost to merit the name of passion,—the passion of gratitude in an affectionate heart toward its sole lover.

Edith Brower.

HIGH FLIERS AND LOW FLIERS.

AFTER the autumn flight is over, a dearth of birds occurs, with the exception of a few hardy ones that eke out a scanty living in our midst the winter long; but with the first signs of an awakening spring a northward movement begins among the feathered kind, extending over two continents. A part of our summer visitors have passed the cold weather in the Southern States, others in Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies, while a few will start on their long journey from under the equator.

The first to arrive are the bluebirds, robins, and song-sparrows, who are apparently more indifferent to cold than most warm-weather birds, braving a frigid temperature, at times, as long as their food holds out. I have heard of a flock of robins passing a winter in Northern Maine, living on the red berries of the dogwood-tree, and seeking shelter at night in the thick spruces that abound there. Winter before last, though uncommonly severe, did not hinder four song-sparrows from remaining in their summer haunts its entire length; while a stray bluebird was occasionally seen in February. Any time after the 1st of March these three are likely to be about. By the 10th they are more numerous, while the voices of the flicker, purple finch, and fox-sparrow are heard, all of them becoming plentiful as the month draws to a close, and are recruited by the presence of the phoebe, meadow-lark, and vesper sparrow. As April opens, six other varieties have found their way to us. They are the kingfisher, ruby-crowned kinglet, yellow-bellied sapsucker, hermit thrush, cow-bird, and myrtle-bird. On the 15th, field and chipping sparrows follow, while the palm warbler may be found scratching the tender herbage under the trees. As April departs, the brown thrasher, chewinks, chimney-swifts, house-wrens, and white-throated sparrows appear. But it is the first balmy days in May that bring a host of new-comers; while by the 20th the spring migration is at its height, and a larger number of the feathered race may be met with then than at any other season in the year, as many of these fair-weather tourists who breed much nearer the Arctic circle are passing, adding immensely to the interest of a walk to any one that loves nature and her winged creation.

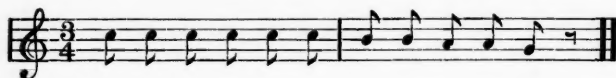
Accompany me in a quiet stroll this May morning, starting with the sun's first rays, as the birds are sure to be out in force, foraging after their long journey and their night's rest. We are equipped with a field-glass, which is a necessary article in determining the smaller birds, especially the warbler family, many of whom have a provoking predilection for the topmost branches of the higher trees. We follow a course that carries us across an old wood-lot to a secluded pasture beyond, once a well-kept orchard and cultivated land, now neglected and forsaken except by a few cows. This is diversified ground of perhaps ten acres in extent. A dozen ancient and gnarled apple-trees still cling to life at its western end, bordered by clumps of medium-

sized birches and alders that fringe a streamlet which flows softly down to lose itself in an extensive swamp beyond. There are patches of bramble, blackberry-bushes, and small alders, here and there, over the whole place. Huge chestnuts fling out their spreading branches at intervals. There are, also, open spaces covered with short grass scattered about.

The wood-lot, pasture, and swamp combined offer such a variety of food, water, and shelter to the birds as are not often found together. Our first songster, a robin-redbreast, alights close by, tilts his head knowingly, takes a little run, and, picking vigorously at a sod, pulls out an ill-fated angle-worm that has approached the surface. We write his name in a small note-book, carried for the purpose, as number one; while we propose to use our eyes, field-glass, and ears, especially the last, to their fullest extent,—a trained hearing being a great aid in locating and distinguishing many species whose voices alone show their presence in the thicker foliage. Continuing on, we hear the lackadaisical, untiring voice of the wood pee-wee, who lights for a moment on the slender branch of a beech-tree:



Song-sparrows are close by, darting in and out between some dead limbs that overhang a pool of water. In the tall spruces opposite, half a dozen purple grackles are calling to each other. By this time the wood-lot is reached. In climbing the stone wall, we see a couple of thrushes, whose grayish breasts are faintly speckled with brown spots, hopping and playing about a big pine trunk lying upon the earth. A glass is not needed: they are Wilson thrushes. The high tree-tops here are dotted with graceful forms at various elevations, and there is a loud and cheery concert filling the air on all sides, coming from many bird throats. Amid the general din, the notes of four birds rise easily above the rest. That "pe-ro," so clear and loud, can belong only to the wood-thrush, and those slow exquisite notes coming from a point somewhat nearer are rendered by the former's rival, the hermit thrush. Farther on, clinging to a dead tree broken off at the top, a flicker is scrutinizing a hole in the trunk, which he has dug out as a home for his little ones. His loud cheery call,



is given at intervals, sounding above the other performers. Overhead a pair of crows pass, uttering their noisy alarm-notes as they spy the intruders upon their privacy and sheer away with hastened wing-beats. This wood teems with the warblers, while the note-book is constantly in use. The black-throated green warbler's pretty strains reach us from three or four trees at once, and now one of their active little forms is discovered clinging to the tips of the branches. A male of

the lovely hooded warbler rests for a moment, perching on a dead branch long enough to pour out his beautiful song several times, which is an unlooked-for treat, as his voice is superior to those of most of his genus, and is rarely heard in such open woods.

The blackburnian, magnolia, and chestnut-sided warblers, together with numerous wood-swallows, are in sight, the last darting and wheeling in and out of the shadowy foliage. Many of these will remain to breed in the tree-hollows abounding here. Two other species are noticed before we reach the pasture.

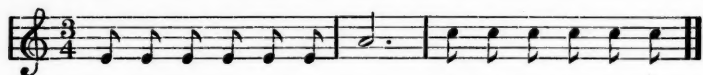
The first is the great crested fly-catcher, who is a noble fellow of his kind, and does much towards thinning out the hordes of annoying insects that are so numerous at present in the woods. He tries his hand at a song, but the effort is a failure. His notes are loud and harsh.

In passing a small and dense thicket I stumble over a rolling stone, causing quite a disturbance. It proves a fortunate accident, as the noise starts from the centre of the close bushes, whither he had retired for the day, a whippoorwill, who drifts away without a sound to mark his progress, yet allowing a good glance at his pointed wings and strongly mottled plumage. So near are we as to note the many bristles about his mouth.

This is a great find, as the night-jar is more often heard than seen, retiring with the dawn to secluded spots, where he remains hidden until twilight wakes him up once more. His rapidly whistled notes are very suggestive of his name. In music they are rendered thus :



On following the more open land of the pasture, we find a new field for investigation, while the songs and calls of an army of birds salute us from every direction, in such a bewildering manner that for a moment one is at a loss to distinguish them individually. But a practised ear soon catches familiar strains. That "who—who—who," then repeated in a higher key, comes, with the oddest sort of a note intervening,



from an old and amusing friend, the yellow chat, a very clown among his kind, and the prince of ventriloquists. His voice seems to sound from all sides at once, and the closest attention is required before his brilliant green back and bright yellow breast, so sharply defined, are distinguishable among the alders. A companion and near neighbor of the former rests on the topmost bough of the same bush, starting at once into such a flood of musical melody as to entrance his audience, who listen spellbound. It is the brown thrasher, a musician without a peer among Northern songsters. He has come to stay ; for, although

we move leisurely off, his rich strains reach us for a long time afterwards.

Passing into a bit of grass-land, a flock of American canaries or goldfinches take wing, uttering their sweet and musical tones,



rising and descending in their flight, opening and shutting their wings as they go, describing a series of curves in the air.

A cow-bird skulks across our path a few feet beyond, his objective point being a thicket to the right. We wait a moment for his reappearance on the opposite side of it, and hear a rustling among the dried herbage. Entering the shrubbery quietly, the sound is found to proceed from a pair of chewinks industriously scattering the last year's leaves in search of breakfast. The male is a very noticeable and handsome creature, with his strong markings of black, chestnut, and white so happily blended.

Something of a recluse, he is lowly disposed, seeming quite content to pass the summer under the bushes rather than among them.

Our walk lies between the Hudson River and Long Island Sound, with a few small streams and sheets of water intervening, and we are not surprised when a fair imitation of a watchman's rattle is sprung from the sky above. The author of it flies swiftly on to seek out the fat minnows found in a lake a mile away. We glance upward, more to enjoy his rapid flight than to determine the bird, for this challenge could have come only from the belted kingfisher.

While watching the "haleyon," two specks in the blue ether enter our vision: so high they soar above the earth that the glass is used for identification. They prove to be hawks, who, sailing in wide circles, crossing and recrossing each other, bear slowly away to the northeast.

Sauntering on again, we approach the orchard. The black-billed cuckoo, that cannot bear a close inspection, darts from out the branches of the nearest tree as silently as possible. So quietly does he take his departure that it might not have been noticed if we had not been keeping a sharp lookout. He leaves behind him a saucy bluebird rejoicing in the fresh May morning that brings numerous flies buzzing around his quarters, making their capture an easy exploit for the brilliant fellow. His soft deep warble hardly stops an instant at our approach.

Birds generally, in May, seem to lose much of their fear, and are more confiding than they will be as the season wanes.

The apple-orchard contains quite a different family of birds from those so far observed, they seeming to care less about our approach. A kingbird, with erected crest, scolds at us from his aerial perch on the highest branch in the orchard; finding this insufficient to drive us away, he makes a daring swoop at us, passing within an inch of my head, like the fearless champion that he is.

A watch-dog of his kind, he chases away all hawks and crows that presume to invade his domains.

The gorgeous fire-bird, or Baltimore oriole, is here, making a careful investigation of the old trees. His high, clear whistle hardly stops unless to devour his prey. A cousin, the orchard oriole, is not far distant, in close company with a red-eyed vireo, who seems all song, as he pours out his melody even when hot weather has set in and the other birds are silent. Ever restless and alert, his eyes and head are constantly moving from side to side, while the green leaves over and underneath him are thoroughly inspected. That living splendor, the ruby-throated humming-bird, is chasing his mate through the rows of apple-trees. So fast they dart that it is difficult to keep the pair in sight. Suddenly the play ends by the female lighting on a decayed branch covered with gray lichens, a favorite spot for their nest, which is so artfully blended with its resting-place that it appears merely a projection or knot there, if found at all.

Some years ago a pair of these birds frequented a similar orchard near my house. They were closely watched, and finally their home was found. Such a tiny affair, but as compact and soft inside as a lady's jewel-box. In it were two pure white eggs, the size of a medium white bean. They were hatched successfully; and when the young ones were fully fledged they climbed on the edge of the wee nest. The mother, who was kept busy feeding them, flew to a neighboring tree, uttering a high squeak, which seemed to be a command or entreaty for them to follow. One did so immediately, and shortly afterwards the other followed. Neither was larger than a bumble-bee, yet they used their mites of wings with greater ease than any other young birds I have ever noticed. On leaving the orchard a flock of cedar-birds, or waxwings, settled there. As far as beauty goes, they are among the handsomest of birds; but they lack song. They are exceedingly fond of cherries, being particularly destructive to them from their social habit of going about together and attacking the fruit in a body. They will spend most of their time on the trees unless persistently driven off.

In skirting the edge of the swamp on our way back, we hear the harsh cry of the blue-jay, who cunningly keeps his brilliant form concealed from view. It is a pity he is such a robber of the eggs and young of other birds. He deserves for his heartlessness as little consideration as either the crow or the shrike. Many red-wing black-birds are sounding their weird cry where the swamp-grass grows in bunches, and with the piping of innumerable frogs make a concert in themselves.

Our progress is very quiet, and in rounding a huge boulder which obstructs the way we approach close to a hairy woodpecker who is tapping a tree, and a pretty Maryland yellow-throat. Both take wing at the same time.

When nearly home, a house-wren salutes us from a post in the garden with a succession of trills and runs gushing from his small throat. Having been away but two hours, our expedition is considered quite successful, for upon footing up the names of the birds noticed in this short ramble, not exceeding three-quarters of a mile in extent, there are forty-three jotted down, a large majority of them having been

sighted. In the immediate neighborhood of the course followed it is probable that there were fifteen or twenty other varieties that escaped us altogether, though they might have been met with in going over the same course the next morning.

We have now reached another and rather puzzling side of our subject, of which comparatively little is known,—*i.e.*, how the birds generally fly, and their movements, whether alone or in bodies, when actually travelling. It is remarkable how much sagacity and cunning are shown by them on their arrival at and departure from their breeding-places; while it is a rare sight to witness a migration on a large scale. There are a few exceptions, however. Everybody has noticed the wild goose, and the wedge he makes in his steady, laborious flight high in the air. The crows, ducks of various species, purple grackle, robin, barn-swallow, and (in former times) passenger pigeon are not difficult to observe on their journey.

Some years ago, during a drive taken in the suburbs of Washington, our attention was attracted by a few robins flying steadily towards the north. They proved to be the forerunners of an immense body of these birds, all keeping their course at an elevation of one thousand to fifteen hundred feet above us. On steady wing they passed out of sight, to be succeeded by others, who soon became so numerous that not only overhead appeared a vast host of redbreasts, but to the right and left the sky was dotted with their forms dwindling into specks as they receded on the sides. This grand movement lasted for an hour or more. A few stragglers brought up the rear.

Occasionally in the country the fall migration of the purple grackle may be witnessed, and if a large flock of the boat-tails light on the ground to feed, the sight is very interesting. The first hundred or so having pitched down on a favorite spot, they immediately begin to move forward, keeping a pretty even front, and feeding as they go. As the rest of the birds come up, they pass over the heads of the leaders, and alight a little space beyond them, and so on until the whole flock has settled. When the first-comers reach the spot the last hit upon, they know it at once, and, taking wing, shoot ahead until clear of the foremost bird, where they light again. They are succeeded by the rear rank, who take the lead in their turn, and this is kept up continually, so that some birds are always in the air. In the case of an alarm, the whole flock starts up together, while the quick action of so many wings upon the air occasions a roaring sound that is audible for some distance.

But who has marked the humming-bird, the chimney-swift, and that great family, the warblers, in their passage from point to point?

One enthusiastic ornithologist hid himself for a whole day in the top of a large oak which overlooked a wide expanse of country, his object being to throw light on this secret. He was rewarded by only a single bird, which lit near him, rested, plumed himself, and then, rising, took a course due south. This solitary traveller was watched with a glass, and kept a direct line until beyond vision. This bird, the rare and exquisite rose-breasted grosbeak, had been noticed flying straight for the tree from the north, long before his arrival, and was

truly migrating alone. Other species fluttered into the same shelter at times during the day, but flew in all directions in such a desultory fashion that our observer was not satisfied about them.

Many varieties fly at night, when they cannot be studied at all. Others, like the ground-birds, endowed with small powers of wing, accomplish their journey in a leisurely manner, resting by the way when tired or hungry. Last summer a veteran trestle-bridge keeper on one of the railroads, where the track went over an inlet from Long Island Sound, informed me that he had noticed for years past large numbers of the smaller birds in the spring and fall fluttering along the track or passing overhead, occasionally using the telegraph posts as resting-places. This old Irishman loved birds for their song, and had two or three hanging in front of his small house, which rested on piles beside the railway, in the centre of the bridge. He had captured some tired bobolinks that had been roosting on his wife's clothes-line over a wooden platform at the back of his home. This would seem to prove that in their passage they availed themselves of friendly bridges, vessels, and islands, in crossing all wide water-ways.

I have known of cases where hermit thrushes, brown thrashers, and bobolinks, too fatigued to resist, have been picked up in the streets of New York. All of them were young birds, probably from late broods, and, while they were able to pass successfully our environs and the East River, to continue across the great city was too much for them. In every case they were captured during the fall flight. Returning from the south, many birds seem to be guided by the coast-line, passing east of New York City (Staten Island is a favorite resting-place), from there to Long Island, and through to the small group at the extremity, after that striking across the sound and continuing up the New England coast.

Glancing through last year's notes, I notice that that fine singer, the fox-sparrow, reached the swamp thicket near my house on the 18th of March. This year his appearance was looked for daily, and he came on the 17th of that month. This shows how accurately a special variety may be expected on a certain date, others of the same genus continuing to follow for three or four weeks later.

W. Warren Brown.

DIES FUGACES.

THE days march round, and round, and round ;
 The solemn years glide stately past ;
 With toil or sport the days resound,
 With grief they lag, with joy they bound,—
 Yonder in shadow lurks thy last.

Joseph Wharton.

THE HEART OF THE FIRE SPIRIT.

IN the land of the Shoshones, in the rugged valley east of the Teton range, at the most silent hour of a night of unearthly blackness, White Bull, the medicine-man, sat by the smouldering embers of his fire, considering the question of selecting from the young warriors of his tribe a new war-chief who would be friendly to his personal interests.

Red Eagle, the old war-chief, who had three days before succumbed to the displeasure of the Bad God by dying of a fever, and was even now being mourned among the pines on the hill-side, as the plaintive shrieks of lamenting relatives borne on the night wind indicated, had to be replaced; and to replace a warrior who has led his people from victory to victory for thirty summers is an act requiring the most mature deliberation. Among the young braves the two most eager for the election were Whirlwind and Washakie, both brave warriors, and both far enough ahead of their competitors in deeds of blood and prowess to be considered the only rivals for the position.

As White Bull was peering through the folds of his blanket into the dying embers, a hand stole through the flap of the teepee, which was presently followed by the body of a young warrior, gliding serpent-like in from the darkness.

"Whirlwind, son of the Gray Wolf, what brings thee here?" asked White Bull, not deigning to move. "Hast thou not found the *tomanowos*?"

"No, White Bull. Four days have I lain at the top of the thunder-rock, naked and without food, yet have I dreamed not. The Great Spirit has not revealed the secret of the *tomanowos*. Since breath went out of the body of old Red Eagle have I struggled with the Bad God, who is seeking to defeat me. But thy magic power, White Bull, can aid me much. Make me war-chief of my people, and all my wealth is thine. Thou knowest the value of the ponies, and of the arrows, and of the furs."

"The Whirlwind is a brave and well-spoken young man. White Bull well remembers his endurance in the sun-dance. Go now secretly to the grave of Red Eagle, and wait until the White Bull comes. Let none of the women see thee."

The young man threw himself to the ground and glided out at the opposite side of the teepee. No candidate for the chieftainship will risk the danger of returning upon his trail. It is an action suggestive of retreat.

After some moments the medicine-man struck sharply upon a tom-tom and shook the rattle at his girdle violently. He had not long to wait before the flap of the teepee opened again and a tall young man stood before him.

"Does Washakie still desire to be war-chief?" he asked, motioning the young man to a seat upon the ground.

"Washakie, bravest of the Shoshones, claims the right to be-war-chief."

"But thou hast no ponies to ride in battle. Thou comest not of the chief's blood. Thou hast married no daughter of a chief. By what right, therefore, dost thou aspire to this highest honor of the tribe?"

"By the right of manhood. By my strong arm, by my swiftness, by my skill with the bow and tomahawk, and by my stealth and cunning, I have slain more enemies than any warrior of the tribe. The Bad Spirit cannot cheat me. I shall be war-chief, and thou shalt aid me, White Bull."

"Good! but what hast thou now for thy *to-manowos*?"

"The heart of a grizzly bear, the brain of a panther, the arrow-thorn that grows on the thunder-rock, the eye of a lynx, and the foot of a gray wolf."

"Good, my son; but it is not enough. White Bull, wisest of the Shoshones, alone knows the secret of the *to-manowos*. He can take the young warriors to the spot, but they have not courage to follow. When they go to wrench the secret from the bowels of the earth, their blood becomes like water. Hast thou a nerve of iron? Wilt thou follow the White Bull into the country of the fire-arrows,—into the land of the Fire Spirit?"

"To any spot thou namest."

"Then meet the White Bull at the foot of the thunder-rock at sunrise. He will lead thee into the land of the Fire Spirit and show thee the secret of the *to-manowos*."

An hour later, Whirlwind, lying secreted at the feet of the dead war-chief, became aware that White Bull was beckoning him apart for a conference. By sunrise he knew that the medicine-man had set out for the land of the Fire Spirit with Washakie, his rival, in search of the secret of the *to-manowos*, and that upon the skill with which he followed upon their trail, without being seen, depended his accession to the dignity of war-chief. He must keep the trail of Washakie like his shadow, yet be as invisible as a spirit. A rumor reached the tribe that the trio had gone far to the north to decide their claims to preferment.

When the medicine-man entered the Fire-Hole Basin of the Yellowstone, the full moon from mid-heaven was flooding the cindered waste with a wan radiance. Jets of steam from a score of craters hissed and wreathed around them, leaping and disappearing like spectres at play. The hot stones and ashes beneath their feet trembled at intervals, as if to begin a mimic earthquake, and then subsided amid sharp explosions and sudden hisses of steam that seemed to burst from every pinnacle and projection of the whitened area.

Before a dark opening that broke the surface and seemed to pierce downward to the very bowels of the earth, the medicine-man stopped. Seizing Washakie by the wrist, he bent forward and pointed into the heart of the crater.

"There, Washakie!" he cried, "there is the heart of the Fire Spirit! White Bull will let thee down by his pony's hair rope until

thy feet touch the ledge of rock. Then put thy hands out and walk straight forward until they touch a substance that is warm and smells like powder. That is the heart of the Fire Spirit. Then draw the arrows from thy quiver and thrust them in one by one till all are gone. The blood will run forth, soft and warm. Gather it in thy hands and fill the quiver. The hot breath of the Spirit will burn thy nostrils, but fear it not. When all is done, pull on the rope, and White Bull will draw thee up and lead thee back over the mountains to be war-chief of the Shoshones. This deed has never yet been done by man. Thou shalt be known as the bravest warrior that ever led thy people in battle."

The young man hesitated, looking at the flickering jets of steam leaping from the broken surface of the basin beyond; then he fell upon his face and peered earnestly into the darkness of the hole. Superstition, dread of the mysterious Fire Spirit that no man had ever yet conquered, filled him with uncertainty. But he believed the words of the medicine-chief of his tribe, who had shown so many others the secret of bravery; and the glory of leading his tribe in war was worth an earnestness of purpose dumb to fear. He had trod the forest many miles to find his *tomanowos*; his strong heart would not fail him now. In another moment he was gliding over the edge of the crater with the noose of the hair rope bound around him.

The medicine-man braced back until the relaxing strain upon the rope told him that Washakie's feet had touched the ledge. Then he coiled the free end of the lariat fast around a projecting rock.

Whirlwind, arrayed in paint and war-bonnet, had crept through the forest and over the mountain as closely as safety permitted. At night his thrice-repeated cry of a cougar had warned the medicine-man of his presence. Reaching the edge of the fire-basin, and screening himself behind a rock, he saw the medicine-man standing alone amid the floating wreaths of steam. He saw him turn and lift a heavy rock, struggle under its weight a short distance, and heave it apparently into the earth.

Then there was a rumbling as if a hundred thunders had broken loose at once. The medicine-man retreated hastily as a dense white cloud burst from the earth at his feet and towered to the very sky. The earth shook, and there came out of the cloud a prolonged, wailing cry, that was swallowed up in an explosion as if the bowels of the earth were rent in sunder. The white cloud was transformed into water, that shot upward in one mighty stream toward the moon, piling volume on volume, and casting itself in steam and spray a hundred feet on every side, like a giant fountain of silver.

When the great geyser had ceased to play, Whirlwind stood beside the medicine-man.

"Where is Washakie?" he asked. "Where is the would-be war-chief?"

"There," answered the medicine-man, pointing to an object lying near the mouth of the crater. "He has found the *tomanowos*; but he pierced the heart of the Fire Spirit with arrows, and the Fire Spirit has slain him."

The water had subsided and fallen back into the earth. Washakie lay upon his face, crushed and smothered, as far from the crater as the length of the lariat to which he was bound permitted the water to throw him. In his right hand he still clutched the quiver, half filled with red, ochreous earth. The medicine-man had taken care that the body should not be lost.

"Here is the secret," he said, taking up the quiver. "It is the blood of the heart of the Fire Spirit. Whirlwind shall be war-chief of the Shoshones. He shall wear the *tomanowos* in his war-bonnet."

Casting the body of Washakie into the crater, they turned their backs upon the Fire-Hole Basin and crossed the mountains into the land of the Shoshones. White Bull at the council fire told of a fight between the two rivals and the Fire Spirit, in which Washakie had been slain, but Whirlwind had come away victorious. Then the crafty deed of the medicine-man was rewarded by the election of Whirlwind as war-chief.

That summer, when he led his people against the neighboring tribes, Whirlwind placed the *tomanowos* in the beak of the eagle which crowned his war-bonnet. Though foremost among the falling braves, he received no wound. Bullets struck away the feathers of his war-bonnet, his pony was killed, the wings of the eagle were torn away, but Whirlwind was not touched. And until the Bad Spirit swept the valleys of Idaho with a plague twenty years later, Whirlwind remained the invincible war-chief of the Shoshones; for his people believed the tale which White Bull had told of the power of his *tomanowos*.

Alvin H. Sydenham.

CLIMBING THE SOCIAL LADDER.

"THEY'LL have a better list than that next year," said the woman who knew, with a wise shake of her head. I had been reading an account of a "function" (as the newspapers now delight to call it) at the home of some people in Washington. The names of the people who had attended the reception were carefully set forth in the order of their dignity. Beginning with the wife of a diplomat, they ranged down to some tradespeople who are still on the outer edge of what is known as "Washington society." Evidently the woman who presided at the function had at least superintended the arrangement of the names, for they were grouped to dazzle the eye of the reader.

"They are in the second social stage," said my informant. "They are only five years removed from the active business of selling and mending stoves. I can remember the head of the family trotting about with his plumber's tools, doing odd jobs for small pay. He was an obstacle to social preferment. Now that he has been dead five years, the family has begun to come out. He left plenty of money, which can be spent on entertaining; and the free luncheon and the punch-bowl will soon draw around them the impecunious of the 'smart set.' They will call miscellaneously, and as fast as they pick

up a celebrity for an entertainment they will advertise the fact liberally. Mrs. A. will see that Mrs. S. was at one of their teas, and she will go to the next. In five years more they will be on the top of the social wave.

"Here is the process of social development," said this knowing woman. "If you have any friends who are ambitious to shine in society and who can afford it, tell them to try this. In the first place, a present interest in vulgar 'trade' is a great drawback. In New York you must be at least one degree removed from any trade association. Washington is not so exacting. All it asks is that you shall move away from the retail counter a little. If the head of the family is engaged in buying and selling things, persuade him to give it up. If he will go into real estate, or elect himself president of a bank, he can still keep an interest in business without feeling the drawback of 'trade.' One of the first families of Virginia is dreadfully split up to-day because one branch of it is keeping shop and another is practising a profession. The professional brother is *persona grata* in even the inner circles; the shopkeeper has a hard time keeping in the social swim at all, though he is not lacking in any social quality.

"When your friends have escaped the environment of 'trade,' have them engage a handsomely furnished house for the season,—preferably one which has a reputation for lavish entertaining. They will have no difficulty in doing this, for, with few exceptions, the people of Washington are given over to the habit of renting their houses and spending the winters in Europe or in New York. On the season's income from a furnished house a Washington family will spend the winter very comfortably on the Continent and pay the expenses of a summer at home.

"Having a house, your friends must make the round of the official circle. Any one, you know, is privileged to call on the family of a Cabinet officer. Most of the calls are not returned in person, but the card of 'Mrs. Secretary Blank' is perfectly available in making up a newspaper list. If the list of senators and members of the House is closely scanned and the society news in the daily papers is watched, your friends will soon know where they are likely to meet the most people, and they can make up their calling list accordingly. Senators' wives all receive on the same day; so do the wives of members. And in the hurry of making up a 'return' list Mrs. Senator Jay is quite likely to include people who have called on her unasked, because she cannot possibly keep track of all her acquaintances.

"Let your friends take warning. They must not give an entertainment in the first season. People hesitate about attending entertainments at the homes of strangers, when they might not hesitate to call. Let them call then industriously, planting the seed from which they may reap a social harvest in the next season or perhaps the next. Let them put all their money into handsome dressing and perhaps a coupé, and let their reception-days be notable for decorations and for a generous table. Now that the women of the Cabinet are running receptions on a cheap plan, the eating receptions elsewhere will be all the more sought.

"In the first season your friends will pick up the hungry club-man, an occasional senator's wife, and some of the other people who have social ambitions; but the last-named must be encouraged only as they seem likely to assist and not to drag down. In the second season the hungry club-man will be an early visitor, and there will be perhaps a few more senators' wives, a sprinkling from Washington's 'old families,' and possibly the wife of a well-known diplomat whose calling circle is not very limited. In this second season let them give a tea. It is comparatively cheap, and it will be a good test of their social progress. If some of the desirable people actually come, let them spread the news abroad that 'next season' they will give a ball. And when the next season comes, have the announcements of that coming ball appear at brief intervals in the society columns, and spread the news around that it is to be a 'terrapin and champagne' affair. That will be a warning to the people who love creature comforts to make their calls early in the season.

"In the first three or four years your friends must be satisfied with what is known as the 'official' set,—the wives of Congressmen and Department officials, with here and there a stray diplomat, and as a background a group of social strugglers. After that they may hope to become established by degrees as a part of the permanent 'society' of Washington. They can talk about 'old families' and sniff at office-holders, because the old office-holders who helped them along will be gone, and the new ones cannot do them much good. And in ten years they will have shaken off the atmosphere of tea and coffee or the memory of the dry-goods counter, and they will have hard work recalling that they have not spent all their lives in the 'smart set.'"

"And for this ten years of devotion," I asked, "what will be their reward?"

"The gratification of an ambition. Whether it is a worthy ambition or not, every woman must determine for herself—and for her husband."

George Grantham Bain.

THE DIFFERENCE.

UNC' Si, de Holy Bible say,
In speakin' ob de jus',
Dat he do fall sebben times a day:
Now, how's de sinner wuss?

"Well, chile, de slip may come to all;
But den de diffe'nce foller,—
For, ef you watch him when he fall,
De jus' man do not *waller*."

John B. Tabb.

ON A SHAD-FLOAT.

THE anadromous instinct of the shad is one of those mysteries of nature analogous to the autumnal flight of the robin and the migration of the wild duck. To these fish, which have been wintering and feeding in those unexplored ocean depths which are only occasionally disturbed by the dredge of the Albatross or the plummet of some marine surveying party, the information is, in an inexplicable way, communicated that the spring is in the rivers. When this news is received the shad are scattered over a marine territory at least one thousand by six hundred miles in length and breadth; but, impelled by a common impulse, the thousands and millions of fish turn their noses westward and enter upon that landward movement which would in birds be called a flight and in animals a march.

The shad begin to appear in the rivers about the 15th of March, and they continue to arrive until the middle of June. It is a remarkable fact that each colony is invariably divided into three grand divisions, which arrive at different times, thus making three successive shoals, or, as the fishermen call them, "runs." The first run is both small in numbers and especially poor in quality, and it is interesting to observe that this is true of the herring as well as of the shad. This advance guard is largely composed of what are known as "hickory" shad, and they differ from the others in such marked degree as to form a distinct variety. The fishermen in the Chesapeake Bay have an un-Mosaic legend that at the creation there were a great many small bones left over, and that to dispose of them the "hickory" shad was made.

A few days after these skirmishers have passed up the river the second or great run begins, and continues three or four weeks. After the fish appear, nothing will disturb their constant, upward progress except cold weather, which, inopportunely arriving, will cause them to seek the protection of the mud at the bottom of the river, where they remain until the chill has left the water. It is impossible to estimate the number of fish entering a river in one of these runs. The estimate of two millions which has been made for the Delaware is very moderate, in view of the fact that more than ten thousand shad have been taken in one haul of the seine in the waters of that river. The third run is small, like the first, and, though the fish are fine in quality, it receives little attention. It is probably composed of stragglers from the main body who are somewhat tardy in their arrival.

The great fishing-grounds are in the Potomac, Susquehanna, and Delaware Rivers; and those who are familiar with the present methods of fishing will readily understand that grounds near the mouth of one of these rivers have a great advantage over those located higher up on the stream.

There is a bit of fishing lore which has been thus versified :

When the dogwood's white
The shad will bite.

There is reason, however, to believe that the unknown poet sacrificed veracity to the exigencies of rhyme, for there are few or no authenticated cases in support of the legend. These fish are taken exclusively in nets, many varieties of which have been devised for this purpose. Those known as scoop-nets, stake-nets, and skim-nets are effective only in a limited and unsatisfactory way; nine-tenths of all shad caught are enclosed in seines or entangled in drift-nets. On account of its size and simplicity of operation, the seine is easily first in importance. It is a great net, varying in depth from six to fifteen feet, and in length from two furlongs to two miles, these variations being adapted to the depth and extent of the water to be fished. Seines more than a mile in length are quite rare, as the extraordinary sizes have been found unwieldy, apt to tangle, and to require great power to haul them in, for which reasons they are looked upon with disfavor by fishermen. A net a mile and a quarter in length is as large as can be hauled to advantage by horse-power or the small steam-engines now in general use.

Seining used to be carried on entirely from the shore, the fish being landed on the smooth, sandy beach; but stretches of such beach fronting on favorable fishing grounds were difficult to find and still more difficult to buy, and the fishermen have now discovered that much better work can be done from floats placed at selected points in the stream. These floats are heavy platforms, fifty feet wide and two hundred feet long, from the down-stream edge of which a smooth inclined plane slopes at an angle of forty degrees to the bottom of the river, where it is securely fastened. A float contains sleeping and dining quarters for twenty men, a steam-engine and boiler, salting-vats and packing-sheds. The location of the float is not in the centre but at the up-stream corner of the territory swept by the seine. Before fishing begins in the spring the ground is carefully cleared of stumps, snags, drift-logs, and everything that might impede or tear the seine. This work is arduous and expensive, especially if it is necessary to remove rocks embedded in the stream. It is an unwritten riparian law that the fisherman who clears a ground thereby secures to himself a proprietary right in it so long as he cares to fish it, or until his claim is forfeited by abandonment.

It must be understood that over the ground, or, more appropriately, through the water, thus cleared the shad are passing up the river in uncounted thousands, and it is, therefore, necessary that the seine shall be laid out directly across the current and along the upper side of the fishing-ground. But, in order clearly to comprehend the whole process, let us imagine ourselves standing on one of these floats, viewing the operations there in progress. Borrowing the established phraseology of the professional guide, the first thing that attracts our attention is the seine. The huge net, doubled upon itself hundreds of times, is lying in a great pile on a platform in the stern of the laying-out boat. This boat is simply an unwieldy barge, accommodating from eight to twenty rowers, according to the size of the seine carried; and it is a strange division of labor that these rowers are almost invariably negroes, while the other men employed on the floats are usually whites.

And now the laying-out boat begins to move off at one side of the float. The rowers, as soon as they catch the stroke, break out into one of those plantation melodies which are characteristic of the negro, and to which he has a remarkable facility for adapting words descriptive of his present occupation and of the wish that the devil may not interfere with its successful completion. Two men in the stern of the barge pay out the seine, fold after fold, and use the utmost solicitude to avert the volley of profanity which is sure to be hurled at them from the float should they allow the net to become tangled. The general direction of the boat is not straight across the current, but several points upstream, with the object of having the seine lying precisely across the current at the moment when it is all paid out. The rowers, accordingly, allow for the drift, and it is usually the case that when the last fold of the seine disappears over the stern the great net can be seen stretching away in a perfectly straight line between the float and the barge. At this moment the bow of the seine-boat is turned sharply down-stream, and, with the invaluable assistance of the current, the oarsmen proceed to carry their end of the seine half-way around the circumference of a great circle of which the net is the radius and the corner of the float the centre. It will be seen that the first position of the seine, as it lies across the stream, presents a barrier of stout meshes to the upward progress of the shad, and the second, or semi-circular, position completely encloses them. Slowly and with great labor the barge carries the free end of the seine around the circle, gradually closing in upon the fish. At almost any of the preliminary, or laying-out, stages the shad might easily escape by simply turning and swimming down-stream, but here advantage is taken of that instinct of the fish which prompts them always to swim against the current. Instead of making off in the direction of open water, the shad try to escape through the net. The slow movement of the seine does not alarm them, and they probably regard it as some natural barrier which must be overcome. While thus enclosing the fish the successful handling of the seine is exceedingly difficult, and especial care must be taken that the shad do not escape at the float end inadvertently left open. If both ends of the net are rightly managed, the shad are gradually persuaded and forced into a position directly in front of the float, and at the moment when they arrive in this precise locality the ends of the seine should be exactly at the opposite ends of the platform. The fish are then completely fenced in by the net, except at the point where the continuity of the seine is broken by the inclined plane of the float. The only care now required is to see that the lower side of the seine, technically called "the lead-line," is kept close to the bottom, so that the fish cannot escape beneath the net. Men in small boats are distributed here and there along the seine, whose duty it is to hold the lead-line down with long poles.

Now the puffing, fifteen-horse-power steam-engine comes into play, drawing in the toggle-line much faster and more smoothly than it could be done by hand, and leaving the men free to draw in on the small lines, which are taken out and fastened to the top of the net. But even with the assistance of steam the work progresses with exceeding

slowness, and no one can predict whether the catch will be large or small. Little swirls on the surface of the water within the net show the presence of the shad, but these indications are so faint that a novice at this kind of fishing is apt to doubt whether there are any shad there. As the circle of corks, which float the upper side of the seine and keep the net perpendicular in the water, gradually narrows, these ripples or streaks on the water become more perceptible, and occasionally the flash of a tail or the momentary gleam of a scaly and shining side shows that the fish are beginning to realize the difficulties of their situation and are frantically seeking some outlet. But the slow, inexorable meshes are closing in upon them, and they have neither the strength of the sturgeon to break through nor the activity of the bass to leap over the enclosing barrier.

When the half-circle outlined by the corks is less than one hundred feet in diameter the interest becomes feverish, and the float is a scene of intense though subdued excitement. Two lines of men, with straining muscles, haul steadily on the hand-lines, suggesting the athletic contest that is called the rope-pull, and even the engine coughs and splutters, as though collecting its energies for the critical moment now approaching. The silence is unbroken, except by the voice of the superintendent giving his orders, and an occasional exclamation, impossible to restrain, from some of the negroes. The water within the net is violently agitated by the thousands of fins and tails beating it into foam. A great sturgeon is thrashing about him furiously, and the hauling is suspended until a man can go out in a boat and spear him. Then the tug and strain begin again; and now the moment has arrived that will test the strength of knot and the quality of fibre in the seine. In the old method of fishing from the shore there was a gradual slope from the middle of the river to the point where the catch was landed, but in float-fishing it is necessary to raise the whole catch along the surface of that inclined plane which slopes to the bottom of the water. In the progress of the catch up this slope the strain on the meshes of the net is tremendous, for the middle of the seine is now practically converted into a great bag full of struggling shad and herring. The flapping prey is in sight, and every muscle is at utmost tension. Foot by foot the seine comes in, and at the moment it reaches the top of the plane the lead-line is held taut, a dozen hands grasp the cork-line and draw it inward, and the fish are landed in an avalanche on the platform.

As you watch the sunbeams dance on that deluge of shad and herring, interspersed here and there with black and striped bass, mullets, spots, and the flat backs of flounders, you realize that it is one of the sights of a lifetime. For a minute all work is suspended, and everybody stands gazing at the pile of struggling, gasping fish, and mentally estimating the size of the haul. Enormous catches are now traditional. The number was gradually reduced from ten to five thousand, and then, still more rapidly, from five to one thousand. At the present time a catch of five hundred is considered good, and a thousand is remarkable. It is customary, however, to count herring as well as shad in estimating, and especially in recounting the size of a haul.

The interval of inaction is short. Men with shallow baskets in

their hands plunge into the mass of fish, hastily sort out the shad, and, staggering under their loads, bear them to the packing-sheds, where they are disposed of with a celerity suggestive of that which prevails in the slaughter-houses of Chicago. The larger fish are prepared for immediate shipment to market, and the smaller ones are placed in salting-boxes to be thus preserved for winter use. A few of the very finest, however, always find their way to the domains of the cook, for the rites of hospitality are strictly observed on a fishing-float, and it is considered courteous to treat the palate as well as the eye of the visitor to a taste of the quality of the shad. The feast will be almost totally devoid of those gastronomic adornments with which civilized society endeavors to soften the hard, materialistic outlines of the business of eating; but having tasted broiled shad on a fishing-float, or planked shad prepared at a camp-fire on the adjacent shore, you will always thereafter wonder why the shad that appears on your table has not quite the flavor you expected.

David Bruce Fitzgerald.

THE GHOST OF RHODES HOUSE.

From a letter written by Percy Rhodes, under date of November 20, to his friend John Slater :

"YOU must be with us for the fortnight. There is a special reason for making the invitation pressing,—no less than the fact that I may never be able to repeat it. Better take the goods the gods provide, even if there's only a job lot of them."

From a letter, date November 25, same writer, same recipient :

"Business be hanged : you haven't had a vacation in ten years, and you've forgotten what the holiday season means. Come along and grow young again. We'll give you coasting, sleighing, skating, and snowballing by day, and six blankets by night. All of us are wild to see you,—my mother, my sisters, my maid-servant, my man-servant, and all the live-stock within my gates. I won't take no for an answer, and neither will they."

From the same to the same, date November 29 :

"I am full of rejoicing that I have your promise to come to us. All of us are delighted to be able to give some slight token that the family appreciate the many good turns you've done me, though we never can repay you for them. Moreover, as was hinted to you in an earlier letter, this is almost surely the last opportunity there'll be for a reunion at the old place : so the word has gone forth to gather in all the clan and its allies. But don't let that frighten you : there won't be a crowd. We've been on the down-grade too long for that. Once we were folks, but now we're just plain people.

"As you are to be here, it will be well for you to know something of the situation. The grandfather of our present rising generation

had his little ways about him. Since the family's official opinion of him is on record on his monument, it is not for me to go into details about the old gentleman, although whenever I read his epitaph I can't help feeling there must be a strain of insanity in the blood. He left the place—it was 'the old place' even in his day—and two sons. Nobody doubted how he would divide his property, for my uncle, who, by the way, was the elder son, was bound up in the place and cared for it more than anything he ever had or ever hoped for, while my father had a liking for commerce and was then in a position to use some ready money to great advantage. When the will was read there were fireworks. The testator had bequeathed the homestead to my father, along with a very little cash, and the stocks, bonds, etc., went to my uncle. There was an ingenious clause which tied things up so that the brothers couldn't swap their inheritances for some years; and when the time was up neither was in a position to make the trade. My uncle lived a disappointed man, handled his capital unwisely, and died poor. My father, who did not survive him long, left his affairs in a tangle his descendants have never been able to unravel. So at last we have decided to get rid of the place, and, in fact, have given an option on it to a man whom we don't fancy greatly, but who appears to be the only buyer in the market.

"I'm afraid our poor little effort at marching out with flying colors will be a failure; but we'll try to be as jolly as a brewers' picnic. You'll meet, besides the family, my cousin Harry, who inherits his father's disappointment, Dick Redway, who thinks one of the girls an angel but is otherwise sane, and Mr. McBrayer, our expected purchaser. Wire us when to meet you, and the brass band will be at the station."

A clock as ancient as the house was striking eleven on the night of December 23, as Mr. John Slater dropped contentedly into a big chair in front of the fire in his room at the Rhodes place. A keen wind was sweeping over the snow-clad New England hills, rattling the windows and reminding those within that it was a pleasant, and a wise, and altogether a good thing to be under shelter and close to stout logs that burned merrily as if glad that their destruction should be a matter of cheery crackling and brave flights of glowing sparks.

"Make yourself as comfortable as you can, old man," advised Slater's host, perching himself on the arm of a second deep chair. He was a slender, boyish fellow, who looked a dozen years younger than his guest, although their ages differed by hardly half that margin.

"This is more than comfort; it's luxury," the elder man replied. "Look at that fire: you don't see logs like that in town."

"Oh, it isn't the fuel that bothers us here,—there's fifty acres of wood on the place: it's the food and the raiment and the fur tippet and the sun-bonnet. Try farming in Yankeeland, and you'll understand our woes and why we plan a migration."

"Still, one can guess it must be hard to give up a home like this."

"Not for us. You've fed with us and you've helped us use up an

evening. You have some notion of our likes and dislikes. Did you get any reason to suppose that my mother, or the girls, are fond of being buried here? or do you think I'm cut out to persuade hired men to make their exertions equal to their appetites? Now, there's Harry,—he'd be delighted to stand in my shoes, but he's too poor to buy them, and I'm too poor to stick them in his stocking to-morrow night. Of course the old place is delightful, in a way, but we can't help feeling a sort of repulsion to it, when we think of all the misery it has brought upon us and how the having of it ruined my father's hopes. Oh, we're glad enough to go. Our only regret is that Harry can't succeed us; but that seems hopeless."

"And so McBrayer will step in?"

"That's the programme. Nobody else is willing to talk decent figures. So he has an option on the property, house, land, cattle, and mortgage—no old family can do without a mortgage. But you've heard enough laments. Good-night."

When Slater went down to breakfast next morning Percy pounced upon him.

"What kind of a night did you have?" the youth demanded. "Anything disturb you?"

"Nothing. Didn't open my eyes until eight o'clock. If you want a fellow to toss and turn, why do you make him so cosy?"

"Well, I'm glad you were happy. McBrayer wasn't, that's all. He's appeared this morning full of a fear that when he buys out the Rhodeses he'll get their ancestors to boot. At least, he says the ghost of one of them was gallivanting about last night and generally misbehaving. Come along and hear his tale."

The others were already at the table, where the breakfast was receiving hardly the attention due it, the narrative of Mr. McBrayer being still in the freshness of only the third repetition. He was a tall, thin, elderly man, dressed with scrupulous care and nicely exact in the cut of hair and whiskers. His voice had a harsh note, and his eyes were too small, too light, and too closely neighborly, but these were the only objections to his personality likely to be raised on first acquaintance.

"I had been sleeping for perhaps an hour, when something aroused me," he was recounting when the young men came within earshot. "I am not a heavy sleeper, as a rule, but I must confess my early nap had been unusually sound. The fire had died down until it was merely a bed of coals which threw out just enough light to show dim outlines where objects stood in the room. As I lay there, I could see nothing out of the way, but suddenly I became conscious that there was something or some one back of me and hidden by the head-board of the bed. It was not a pleasant moment."

He took a sip of water, and then went on:

"An instant's reflection satisfied me that it was not likely a burglar could have entered, for I had bolted the door, and both the windows, owing to the coldness of the night, were securely fastened. Thus reassured, I raised myself on my elbow and turned my face towards the door. As I did so, a shape rose before me, perhaps half a dozen feet

away. For an instant it stood there, and then it began to move, not towards me, but across the room. It passed near the foot of the bed, raised one arm as if to threaten me, and then vanished, either through or under a curtain which partly covers the entrance to what I had supposed to be a closet."

"Then what did you do?" It was almost a chorus of inquiry.

"I regret to say that, temporarily, I was incapable of motion; but as soon as I had recovered somewhat from my—ah—surprise, I arose and lighted the lamp. The door into the hall was still securely bolted, and evidently had not been opened. Nothing in the room had been disturbed. With some caution, I examined the spot where the figure had disappeared. The curtain of which I have spoken did not touch the floor by perhaps two feet. The space behind it, which I had supposed to be a closet, proved to be a passage-way less than a yard deep, leading to a door standing ajar but without lock or bolt. As I pushed open this door, however, I was given evidence that no man could have passed through it, for a mass of spider-webs, torn loose by moving the door, caught on my face when I tried to venture into the room beyond. I am observant of trifles, which often prove important. The inner room was hardly more than a large closet, and was without doors except the one I entered by. Its single small window was fast, and, although I exerted all my strength, I could not budge it."

"But the ghost? You're giving us Hamlet with Hamlet left out," cried Percy. "What did he look like?"

"He was tall," McBrayer answered, with a shade of reluctance. "So far as I could make out, he resembled an old man with a long white beard; but, you understand, there was very little light, and the outlines were not altogether sharply defined."

"Didn't he say something in a ghost of a voice?"

"There was not a sound."

"This grows interestingly creepy. Mother, which of the ancestors was it?"

Mrs. Rhodes had listened to the story with an expression which blended interest in it and regret that it should be told, and now, when she was thus appealed to, her reply was given with an evident effort.

"Your grandfather had a long white beard, Percy," she said, "but I never heard that he haunted the house."

"'Twould be just like him, though," said her son. "But I say, Harry, you ought to be able to throw some light on this; you have the family traditions by heart. Trot out our pet skeleton, that's a good fellow."

"It is sheer nonsense, Percy," his cousin answered. "There is an old yarn about grandfather's ghost, and Mr. McBrayer's room is one he often occupied. But there the circumstances cease to hitch. The person who years ago declared the old gentleman appeared to her was a nervous, hysterical woman, who must have been half crazy anyway, for she lost her reason soon afterwards and had to be sent to an asylum, while Mr. McBrayer here is as hale and hearty as ever, and is in no danger of going mad, as his cool conduct last night proves. Besides,

the story runs that the ghost she saw was dark gray rather than white, except for the beard, which was like snow."

"Gray!" McBayer exclaimed. "Why—I don't think I mentioned anything about color, except in regard to the beard."

"Well, the lady who saw the ghost was sure of that point. I've been told the matter of color caused a good deal of talk in the family at the time."

"Come, come," nervously interposed Mrs. Rhodes, "we've had enough of horrors, I'm sure. You young people should make the most of this Christmas weather. I shall exercise my authority and forbid any more ghost talk until sundown."

Long before evening Mr. John Slater felt himself on terms almost of intimacy with his hospitable entertainers, for there are few things better calculated to break down barriers of reserve than clear bracing weather, good ice on the pond and a jolly fire on the bank, with much laughter and chatter and now and then a tumble further to enliven matters. Among the Rhodeses he found a strong resemblance, not only in feature but also in voice, manner, and tastes; and, naturally enough, the strong liking he had for Percy widened its scope to take in Percy's mother and sisters. The girls were pretty, good-humored, and clever. Madeline, the elder, and the adored of Redway, painted almost as well as her brother, who promised in a few years to make a name for himself as an artist. Margaret, the younger, was a born musician. As his acquaintance with them ripened, it was easier for Slater to appreciate their willingness, or rather anxiety, to part with the old place, which, beautiful as it was, meant exile from the city and from the things for which they cared most. It was easy, too, to learn the affection their cousin cherished for the estate, to note the thoroughness of his knowledge of it. It was harder to discover the causes of McBayer's desire to acquire the property, for, though he appeared to be wealthy enough to indulge in such purchases if he chose, he was not a man of the sort to be attracted by country life or to be satisfied with an establishment several hours by rail from the manufacturing town in which he had gained riches. While he could hardly be classed as an old friend of the Rhodes clan, he evidently had had some acquaintance with two or three generations of them; and, though he was a guest at the house, Slater understood that he was far from welcome. The ingenuous Percy made no secret of his view of the situation.

"I suppose you're wondering why McBayer is here," said he. "You can guess we don't fancy him, but just why we don't it's hard to tell. He's never done us any harm, so far as I know; he doesn't want to marry any of us who are eligible for such an honor; in fact, there's nothing definite against him. Privately, though, I think his conscience is like the vermiform appendix; it takes a surgical operation to get at it."

"That's flattering to him."

"Honor where it belongs! He got his bid here because he hinted he'd like it, and, considering the negotiations going on, there was only one thing to do. Of course we'll treat him decently. But, I say, old

man, according to that yarn of his, the ancestor doesn't take to the notion of having him in possession."

"It is a queer piece of business."

"The ancestor always was a resourceful old gentleman. I'll say that for him," Percy responded.

In spite of the very open efforts of Mrs. Rhodes, to whom the subject of ghosts seemed to be particularly distasteful, the talk that evening, when the party gathered in the drawing-room, drifted continually to McBrayer's experience. On the whole, Slater perceived, the hero of the adventure had been frightened greatly and was full of forebodings of what might happen in the next few hours, although his hostess had insisted that he should be transferred to another room. When the time for retiring came,—it was after midnight, nobody being anxious to miss seeing Christmas eve out and Christmas morning in,—the other men united in escorting McBrayer to his new quarters, at some distance from those he had first occupied.

"You're right in the middle of the house, Mr. McBrayer," Percy remarked, "and you're three doors from the ancestor's promenade. Still, it's the height of the spook season, and you'll have to be careful. If anything happens, sing out, and we'll come to the rescue. Slater's next door to you, Redway's on the other side, Harry's just around the turn in the east wing, and mother, the girls, and I are in the west one. If you've got a rabbit's foot with you, put it under the pillow. Good-night."

In the course of the day Slater had made an inspection of the premises. More than one generation had had a hand in the construction of the house, although a common plan could be traced from one end of it to the other. The central part, which dated back almost to the Revolution, was larger than most dwellings, and, as it had received extensions in the days when the family fortunes prospered, the house was now a huge structure, capable of sheltering a score of guests and altogether beyond the usual requirements of its occupants, who, finding the west wing, the most modern part, amply sufficient for their accommodation, seldom made use of the rest of the establishment, except on occasions like the present, when there were several guests. On the second floor a long and rather wide passage extended completely across the building, with a window at each end. By some freak of the architect, it was not ceiled in the usual fashion, but was carried up into a long arch, so high that its upper region seemed totally lost in the shadows. A lamp burned at night in a bracket near the western end, but its light counted for little beyond a radius of a few feet.

Duly cogitating the situation, Slater went to bed. He was not a believer in ghosts, but intuitively he felt that McBrayer was to have another vision; and curiosity served to keep him awake for a time, in spite of the physical weariness a city man acquires in a long day of country sports. He was barely in his first doze when a shriek roused him, and a second and a third cry in quick succession hurried him from his bed. Pulling on his trousers and seizing a coat, he threw open his door and ran into the hall, meeting McBrayer tottering from his room, a ghastly figure in his night-garb, and with a face as white as his raiment.

Others had heard his cries. Redway and Percy came up, and Harry, last of all, hurried down the hall from his end of the house. Sounds of excitement from the west wing gave evidence that the ladies, too, had been roused from their slumbers. The men grouped themselves around McBrayer, who had grasped Slater's arm and was clinging to it.

"He came—he came again—" he cried, brokenly, "the old man—just as he was last night—in his gray dressing-gown—and he stood there—first over across the room—then by the other wall—then I called out—and he was gone."

"You saw him distinctly, recognized him?" Percy asked.

"Just as he was—in his last year—I recognized the gown—he wore it continually towards the end."

"But——"

"I couldn't be mistaken—there was a sort of glare—a stream of light—there he was—right in the midst of it——"

"Well," Harry broke in, "it's most curious, certainly. But of course there's some mistake somewhere. Ghosts are out of date, and it's freezing here. If you will excuse me, I'll hasten back to my blankets."

He ran down the hall, and the blackness towards the east hid his figure; a moment later the door of his room was closed with a slam.

"There's a philosophy I envy," said Percy. "I don't believe anything short of a ghost quadrille would keep Harry out of bed. All the same he's right about the cold. Come to my room, Mr. McBrayer, and you other fellows come along, too. There's a fire going yet, and something that will hearten us all."

Leading the way to his quarters, the host tossed a resinous knot upon the coals in his fireplace, and, as it blazed up, his three guests drew chairs close to the hearth. He served out wraps to them, McBrayer drawing the capital prize of the lottery, a long ulster that fell to his heels, and then cheered them with a stiff glass of brandy apiece.

"Now tell us some more about your vision," he said, when these duties had been done; "give us the details, please."

"I think you have them," McBrayer answered. The fire and the brandy, and most of all the presence of companions whose bodily existence was undoubted, began to revive his courage and to recall to his attention the fact that he was old enough to be the father of any of his hearers. "After all, I can tell you little more. First the form appeared on one side of the room, then on the other. I saw it with the utmost distinctness."

"Had you been asleep?" asked Redway.

"No. I confess I was somewhat apprehensive, after last night's experience, and I was thoroughly awake. There was no noise; the thing appeared without warning of any kind. Each time it stood before me for perhaps one or two seconds."

"Had you been looking at your fire?" queried Slater.

"Not for some minutes. Anyway, there was hardly any glow from it, and the room was dark. But the figure was surrounded by bands of light, and I saw its outlines as clearly as I see you now."

"Ever been troubled this way before?" It was Percy's turn as cross-examiner.

"Never until last night," McBrayer answered, in a tone which showed that the question galled him.

"Nerves never played you any tricks?"

"Never. I am not an imaginative person."

"I believe you," said Redway; "but don't you see, Mr. McBrayer, that very fact adds to the mystery? Here you, a clear-headed, practical man of business, tell us that you have seen a ghost; you describe its appearance almost in detail. Have you no theory to account for what you saw?"

McBrayer sprang to his feet. "I wish all three of you would come with me to my room. I want you to examine it. You may be able to strike some clue."

He seemed himself again as he strode to the door, but as he threw it open he paused until the others had come up with him. After all, he had reason for hesitancy, for the lamp in the bracket had in some way become extinguished, and the long passage was like a vault for gloom.

"Ugh! This is blackness," said Percy.

"Look! Look! What's that?" cried McBrayer. They had advanced a few feet along the hall, and their eyes had grown a little more accustomed to the dense darkness. Far before them they had made out a glimmer which they knew to be from the east window, but nearer them something was barring the way, something indefinable, uncertain, a swaying, changing, ghastly screen, evident to them all, and yet so tenuous that through it the window still showed in a cold gleam.

"There it is, there! there!" McBrayer repeated. He was gripping Slater's arm with the desperate energy of a man stricken by overwhelming terror.

"By heavens! there is something there!" exclaimed Redway, in a voice that shook in spite of him. Slater took a step forward, dragging McBrayer with him. By long odds he was the coolest of the four, but his nerve too was beginning to yield to the contagious fear of the man who was clinging to him, and after the single movement he paused involuntarily. A second later he, like the others, was shrinking back. A sheet of light had flashed across the hall, a glistering curtain half dazzling them for the instant it shone before their eyes, and vanishing as suddenly as it had appeared. Yet, swift as had been its coming and its going, all of them had seen, right in the middle of the broad beam, a tall figure, white-bearded and gray-garbed, rising out of the night to loom before them and dispute the passage.

For a moment the four men, huddled together, were speechless. McBrayer, with all his terrors revived, had fallen to his knees, apparently incapable either of flight or of supplication for protection. As for the others, in the shock of their surprise, they were as helpless as he. Slater was the first to gain a semblance of self-control. At his direction Percy brought a lamp, and McBrayer was raised and half led, half carried to young Rhodes's room, where Redway was detailed

to keep him company and guard him, if possible, from further visitations.

"Now, Percy, let's examine the hall," Slater said. "That's the first thing to be done."

The pair moved cautiously along the corridor until they reached the spot where, as nearly as they could determine, the figure had appeared, but there they failed to discover any clue to the mystery. A little farther on they found a door ajar, but the room behind it was unoccupied.

"Hist! there's somebody moving," whispered Percy, as they were about to resume their advance; but their excitement was short-lived; the somebody proved to be Harry, who came towards them, muttering complaints about the cold and rubbing his eyes as he drew near the light Percy carried.

"I thought I heard a commotion again out here," he said, sleepily. "What are you fellows prowling about for now? What's the trouble? Why, Percy, your eyes are popping out of your head."

"They've a right to," his cousin replied, and briefly he recounted what had happened. Harry, who heard him with a shade of impatience in his manner, contented himself with a safe statement that it was all very curious. He offered, however, to take part in the investigation, and for five minutes aided them in a shivering and resultless search along the draughty corridor. This proceeding ended, he went with them to Percy's room, where in the mean time Redway had succeeded, by building up a blazing fire and freely dosing his patient with brandy, in restoring McBrayer's courage to some extent. With the revival of his spirits the elderly man had regained something of his normal stiffness of manner. He no longer talked willingly of his visions, and, in fact, seemed annoyed by the others' volubility on the topic. It was clear that he felt relief in bidding them good-night, an arrangement having been effected by which he was to share Percy's quarters until morning; and his associates in the adventure of the hall left him with a growing conviction strong about them that, except when he was frightened out of his wits, he was not a very sociable person.

Christmas day, thus begun at Rhodes House, passed rather uncomfortably. McBrayer, soon after breakfast, pleaded a most transparent excuse for returning to town, and departed in a state of grimly conscious rectitude, leaving behind him a household possessed by anything but the seasonable spirit of rejoicing. Though Mrs. Rhodes struggled to maintain her cheerfulness, Slater could see that she was nervous and ill at ease, more, as he guessed, from dread of further years with the family mill-stone fast about the family neck than from any inquietude as to the nocturnal prowlings for which the ancestor had suddenly developed an annoying weakness. The girls, Redway, Harry, and Percy, deciding to go to church, started off on the five-mile sleigh-ride the decision involved, and Slater was left free to renew the investigation which had borne so little fruit the night before. As a preliminary, he visited the room in which McBrayer had had his first experience. There the searcher found nothing to reward him for his

trouble, nor did the smaller room connected with the bedroom prove a promising field at first. A mass of cobwebs still hung from the edge of the door, just as McBrayer had described them. For want of a better clue, Slater studied them, his eyes running over the maze of dingy lines without much hope of getting any suggestion from the inspection.

"That's odd," he said to himself at last. He had partly lifted the tangled threads, and was trying to solve the problem of their attachment to the wood. "I didn't suppose spiders had natural glue to squander in that fashion."

A dull opaque spot showed on the edge of the door and marked the place where the webs were supported. Pulling his knife from a pocket, he cut out the bit of wood which bore the spot and carried it to the window.

"Very like a good-sized drop of mucilage," he soliloquized. "Never heard, though, of ghosts carrying bottles of such stuff. Still, if it is mucilage of this world, there ought to be another drop congealed on the frame of the door-way. By Jove!" he added, as he turned back to the suspicious spot, "here it is, sure enough. The ghost then must have come out of this cubby-hole, put his cobweb seal on the door to baffle pursuers, and then—well, he must have gone somewhere. Where'd he go, though? The window can't be opened, and of course he didn't return to the big room. The floor is solid. How about overhead? Why, half the ceiling's gone!"

Ceilings were unusually lofty in the old house, and this was no exception to the rule. But nailed to the wall were stout cleats, upon which shelves had once rested, the series of them extending so high that the shoulders of a man standing on the topmost rest would be well above the level of the attic floor, the rough boards of which showed in places through the opening in the plastering.

"Ghost or man, that would be an awkward climb," Slater said, doubtfully. "But I'll have a look up above, anyway."

Mrs. Rhodes and the servants were busy down-stairs, and he had the upper region to himself. With some difficulty he found the stairway leading to the attic, and, once at the top of the flight of steps, was in that part of the establishment from which he believed the night-walker conducted his campaigns. Over the wings the roof was almost high enough to make a third story, but above the structure connecting them it was so low that he could hardly stand erect. There were no partitions in this part of the attic, which formed a long, low room, with the ridge of the arch over the hall extending the length of it. The flooring between the wings was in very bad repair, and there were great gaps here and there in the planking. Picking his way about the place, Slater found several things to interest him, among them a stout rafter just above the opening in the ceiling of the little room, about which was tied a rope, long enough, as a test showed, to reach almost to the second floor.

"Now," Slater reflected, "I begin to understand that the ghost didn't have such a difficult climb after all."

Yet, for that morning at least, he was fated to get little more light

on the mystery, and, though he noticed broken ceilings in several rooms, for the old house was sadly out of order, he came across nothing likely to aid him in solving the problem. As to the apparition in the hall he could hardly form a theory on the basis of his observations in the attic, although he was convinced that human hands had directed the whole performance.

"Beyond any question, Mrs. Rhodes, you may be relieved of the reputation of maintaining ghosts," he told that lady later in the day. Woman-like, she drew some comfort from the assurance, even while she put little faith in it.

"Indeed, I hope so," she said. "This had been a terrible experience for me,—you can't imagine how terrible. Percy has probably given you a hint of our troubles. We are all anxious, so anxious, to dispose of this place, and now I suppose we never can sell it. Mr. McBryer will never take it. We did not care for him personally. If only Harry had the money we should prefer him a thousand times; but the poor boy cannot scrape together the amount required. He tried to get it, tried and tried again, but to no purpose. I know it almost broke his heart when he heard of the bargain with Mr. McBryer. They have never been good friends. But after what has happened it doesn't seem to matter much. Really, Mr. Slater, when I look forward to living here perhaps for years, I can't help being selfishly wrapped up in our own misfortunes."

"Possibly the end of them is nearer than you think."

"I'd like to believe that," said Percy, who had been listening to the talk; "I'd like to believe it, but I can't. You don't appreciate the ancestor, old man. He's reappeared just to make certain that, after he has kept us tied to this place for lo these many years, the knots are still tight. He was a gentleman of very strong opinions, he was, and the other world hasn't changed him."

"Then you are satisfied that it was his shade that we saw in the hall?"

"What else could it be? There he was, plainly enough, yet there was nothing fleshly about him. Why, I seemed to see through him. I dare say McBryer had been through just the same experience in his room."

"Undoubtedly. But, Percy, isn't it conceivable to you that this ghostly incident can be accounted for in a reasonable way? The optical delusion theory won't explain it, I admit; McBryer's visions might be laid to that, but it's scarcely possible that four of us could be similarly and simultaneously deluded. So we'll agree that we saw something which existed. My contention is that we may be able to explain its presence in the hall without resorting to the supernatural."

"You ought to confer with Harry: he's another sceptic and scoffer. I'll call him over here to compare notes. He's the only one, you know, who didn't have a chance to be scared out of his wits."

"Yes, bring him along," said Slater. Ever since his discoveries of the morning he had been evolving a plan, and the thought now struck him that perhaps the moment for putting it into effect had arrived. There was risk in what he proposed, and he might find him-

self in a most unpleasant position ; but, after all, the chance was worth taking. By a process of elimination he had reduced the number of possible human factors in the nocturnal mystery until only one was left in his calculations ; and, although there was little of evidence and much of speculation in the case he was trying to make out, he was beginning to feel the desire strong within him to convict the defendant he had hit upon.

"Here's the other scientific doubter," Percy announced. "Get together, you two, and do your worst. As for me, I stick to the good old way : seeing's believing. Let me know when you agree. I've got to look after some earthly affairs for a few minutes."

"So, Mr. Slater, you've formed a theory?" said Harry. He spoke quietly, and with the air of one who took little interest in the subject.

"In a way, yes. I shall be glad to tell you of it. You may be able to help me out."

"Delighted to do so, I'm sure."

Slowly, and with eyes fixed upon his hearer's face, Slater recounted his discoveries in the room McBrayer had occupied on the first night, the curious manner in which the cobwebs were fastened to the door, the cleats against the wall, the hole in the ceiling, and the rope tied to the rafter above it.

"In short," he added, "I satisfied myself that an active man could easily make his escape after the demonstration in McBrayer's room, especially as the victim of such a practical joke would, naturally, be too terrified to attempt an immediate investigation. The very fact that McBrayer noticed the webs leads me to believe that he did not make an examination until some time later, probably not till daybreak. A person in a state of intense excitement would hardly be impressed by such a trifling matter. We may assume that McBrayer was cowering under the bedclothes long after his visitant was safely out of the way."

"It is altogether probable," the younger man responded. He spoke in the same quiet manner, but Slater saw that his fingers were beginning to pick at the arm of his chair.

"Then I explored the attic, where I found a number of interesting things. In brief, I reached a point where——" The speaker paused for a moment, for he was arriving at the most difficult part of his narrative, and was passing from facts to surmise—"where I decided that my discoveries ought to be laid before you."

It was a chance shot at the best, but it told. Young Rhodes was startled, plainly enough, but in an instant he had recovered command of himself.

"In view of its results, this ghost-raising is a serious matter," Slater went on. "The disappointment it has brought upon your aunt——"

Harry interrupted him with a quick gesture.

"You've said enough. If you will come with me we may be able to solve the mystery," he said. He was very pale, and his face had become drawn and haggard.

He led Slater to his room, unlocked a trunk, and drew from the

top tray a long white beard. Stepping to the wardrobe, he produced a dressing gown of a dull gray.

"These may assist you in developing your theory," he said, bitterly. "I wore them the first night. There is an opening from this room to the garret, much like the one you found in McBrayer's place. Knowing every nook and cranny of this house as I do, it was very easy for me even at night to mount overhead, cross the attic, descend into the little room adjoining his, and make my way on into his chamber. I wore the beard, the gown, and felt slippers, which were practically noiseless. When he awoke and saw me he must have fainted from fright, and I had no difficulty in passing under the curtain he described to you and partly closing the door to the inner room. Then I fastened the cobwebs,—it had taken me many hours to arrange these details, and I carried a bottle of prepared glue in the pocket of the gown, while the webs were where I could get at them quickly,—climbed easily to the attic, by the aid of the rope, and went back to my room."

"But the second night's operations,—how about them?"

"They were less acrobatic, though they involved the use of a good deal of apparatus. I tried a simple trick, and I am almost surprised that none of you detected it. This was the chief appliance,"—he took a small magic lantern from his trunk: "I have employed it often at home, and can prepare slides. Last night the slide bore a rough portrait of my grandfather. Near the top of the door of the room McBrayer then occupied was a hole just about large enough for my purpose and out of sight of any one lying on the bed. I could hear him rolling and tossing, and knew that nervousness had him in its clutches. Standing on a footstool outside his door, I flashed the picture first on one wall of his room and then on the other. He saw the beams of light, but was too terrified to try to account for them. His shrieks aroused the house, of course, but I had expected something of the sort, and all I did was to run to my own den, with the stool under one arm and the lantern under the other. I had to show myself for a moment, but you will recollect that I didn't stay long. Afterwards, while you were in Percy's room, I went to an unoccupied room next to McBrayer's and prepared the next tableau. That was the one you saw."

"Exactly; we all saw it. Was it part of your plan that we should?"

"Not at all; there was a miscalculation. I meant it as a finishing touch for McBrayer alone, but when you all came along I had to run the risk. It was simple enough; merely another use of the lantern through a narrow slit. You afterwards found the door ajar."

"But what was the picture thrown on? Something—we couldn't make out what—seemed to rise before us in the darkness."

Young Rhodes smiled with rather sheepish pride.

"A yard or two of fine net,—a piece of an old lace curtain, I imagine,—supported by strings leading up through holes in the arch and then over pulleys and down to my reach, and with shot at the bottom of the stuff to keep it somewhat steady. I had to work quick, for four sets of eyes meant four chances of detection. When I heard

exclamations and knew that you had made out the curtain, I turned on the picture for a fraction of a second. Then, before you had recovered from your surprise, I had the net hoisted up into the bend of the arch: when you and Percy came scouting along the hall a little later you walked right under it. But before that—it was when you took McBrayer back to Percy's room—I had slipped out and was safe in my own place. You met me when I came along to see what all the hubbub was about. An hour or two later, when everything was quiet again, I removed the net and strings. How I came to forget the rope the night before amazes me. It was a great blunder. But, now that I've told you all this, what are you going to do about it?"

"I'll answer frankly," said Slater. "Just now I don't know."

He paced up and down the room for a moment, his hands thrust in his pockets and his head bowed in perplexing thought. What ought he to do? Should he repeat the whole story and let Harry get out of the difficulty as best he could? Mrs. Rhodes surely would never forgive her nephew, and McBrayer could be relied upon to do something villanously vindictive. Ought he to keep his own counsel and suffer the mystery to remain unsolved, to the lasting discomfort of the household? Could he reveal enough to allay their fears and yet shield the manufacturer of the ghost? At last, in doubt, he turned to the culprit.

"Look here, young man, what was your motive?" he asked. "You must have had some powerful incentive, to take so much trouble."

"I suppose you might as well get the whole thing. McBrayer was my father's worst enemy—I never knew why. He was a sort of ward of my grandfather, and, although he lived in dread of the old man, he acquired a certain influence over him, which caused the unexpected division of the property by my grandfather's will and twisted the fortunes of both branches of the family. McBrayer understood perfectly the intense desire my father had, and I have, to regain the old place, and his only reason for purchasing it was to thwart me. When I found my aunt determined to sell out, I tried my best to raise the money needed. I had a little, but not enough by two thousand dollars to make what she asked as a first payment. I knew that if I could make that payment the next could be arranged, for once in possession here anybody understanding its resources could make the place more than self-supporting.

"At that time I didn't guess that I had inherited McBrayer's hatred, and, though he had never been very cordial to me, I decided, as a last resort, to seek a loan from him. He heard what I had to say. Then he opened the gates of wrath. Not only did he refuse me the loan, but he also declared that he would prevent me from getting the money elsewhere; and, as he is one of the financial powers hereabouts, there was no doubt that he could execute his threat. To make assurance doubly sure, he told me he would himself buy the place, keep it as long as he lived, and will it to some charitable society.

"You can imagine my feelings on hearing all this. For days after the interview I sought in vain for some plan of revenge. Finally a clue came to me,—oddly enough, from Redway. He had heard that McBrayer was to take the place, and the news had surprised him.

"‘He won’t live there,’ said Redway. ‘It’s not the sort of house for a family of one, especially when the one is a superstitious old man. McBrayer’s single weakness lies that way. How do I know it? I found it out by chance: there isn’t time to tell the story now.’

"The hint was enough. I picked out grandfather’s ghost as most likely to be effective. You know the rest. I must say, though, that terrifying him was the limit of my plan: I didn’t suppose he would abandon the purchase. But before he went away this morning he formally notified my aunt that the bargain was off."

"The notice has depressed her greatly," Slater observed.

"Indeed it has. After the enemy had fled I began to see what a mess I’d made of it all. Then, when you told me the trail you had started on, I resolved to confess and make a clean breast of things,—at least to you. And now again, sir, what are you going to do about it?"

"Nothing desperate," Slater answered. "I’ve evolved a little plan which may prove mutually satisfactory. I’ll make a deal with you, Mr. Rhodes. I am not a rich man, but I can lay hands on the amount you mentioned as required to piece out your funds. If you can show me fair security for the loan and explain how you expect to make the place profitable, a check will be in your hands in three days. Incidentally, a pledge that no more ghosts shall walk would be advisable. Do the terms please you?"

"Do they?" cried the young fellow, seizing his companion’s hand. Something rose in his throat and seemed to choke him. "Come down-stairs to the library," he went on, after a little: "you shall see the map of the property, and I’ll tell you how it can be made a money-maker. But, Mr. Slater, how can I thank you?"

"Don’t try. For your ear alone, I’ll admit that the fright you gave McBrayer atones for a good deal. Mighty unpleasant man, that McBrayer!"

To a well-pleased audience that evening Harry made the announcement that Rhodes House was to change owners and yet remain the property of a Rhodes. His conference with Slater had been followed by another with his aunt, which had restored that lady to her normal cheerfulness and assured her nephew that no further obstacles remained in his way.

"Hurrah for us!" Percy exclaimed. "That suits everybody. But, mind you, Harry, the ghost goes with the house. We disown him completely. We don’t want to meet him again: he’s not in our set.—By the way, though, Slater, you haven’t revealed whether you’ve probed the mystery. Tell us, that’s a good chap, what you’ve discovered. We’re as curious as Mrs. Bluebeard before she looked in the closet."

"Some things can’t be explained," said Slater. "But rest easy: the ghost isn’t likely to parade by night again."

"Comforting, but indefinite. At least assure us that what we saw was really there. Can’t you say the apparition was not due to a prevalence of optical delusions in the old house?"

"Certainly I can. Lay the whole thing to—to—well, call it structural peculiarities."

William T. Nichols.

AN ARTIST'S HABITAT.

I SIT at a large northern window, before a wide green-baize-covered table littered with papers, letters and other, and with tools of the engraver, the draughtsman, and the writer. In the middle front of the table is the desk at which I work, writing, drawing, or engraving, according to my moods or needs. That old desk has been my servant, my companion, and my friend for more than half a century; indeed, at the date of this writing, for full sixty years. I can scarcely look upon it without recalling hours of happiness when I first used to sit before it, not alone, young, joyous, and hopeful. Words of poetic aspiration, of heart-expression, and, alas! of heart-broken sorrow, words I hoped might be found helpful for my fellows, words of vehement assault on wrong, have been written upon it; tears have fallen on it; and it has been as an art-altar on which a life's industry and endeavors have been continually laid. Over it I have gazed upon a Southern English garden, at lake and mountains (with all their changeable aspects of hour and season) in the English Lake country, at the formal primness of a London square; and now as I look up I see across it the tender greens of a Connecticut spring, enriched with the transient wealth of cherry and pear and peach and apple blossoms and a profusion of lilacs. My life comes back to me, its vicissitudes and experiences, its gladnesses and sorrows, its triumphs, its troubles, and its failures. That desk is as it were the tombstone of my life, on or in it no mere epitaph, but the very story of my life, its feelings, its thoughts, its happenings. I open the desk-drawer, and once again, after how many times, repeat examination of the store of relics, minute but not unimportant, therein treasured: miniatures and photographs, small casts of antique gems, medals and rings, and other memoranda of the past,—my own past, and some of the past of history. And now I am in a humor for retrospection, and I look round on the room in which I have spent the most of my days during twenty-five years.

At my right, close against the angle of my great bow-window, square-bowed [] , on a carved wood bracket, stands a full-sized plaster cast of that loveliest of all antique heads in the British Museum, the Clytie. Very beautiful it is even in the poor material, though wanting the graceful delicacy of the age-toned marble. Visiting the Museum in days gone by, on leaving the reading-room how often I would cross the hall and go through the chamber containing the busts of the Roman emperors to the gallery beyond, for one more look at this perfection of womanhood! Even if I had time to go farther and worship at the Parthenon, I must return by the smaller gallery for another glance at Clytie. Beneath the head in my room hangs a small medallion of the grand head of Music's beloved disciple, Beethoven;—a head such as might be that of Apollo disdainful Marsyas; and below that a small oil sketch of a moonlight, the early attempt of an artist in the first days of a too brief happiness, when

he studied to become a painter. It hangs there a never-to-be-hidden record of loss and failure.

Farther to my right stands an easel on which is a large framed picture in oils of a child and a white bear sitting together, side by side, on a stile, the little golden-haired, bareheaded and barefooted maiden holding up in both hands a book from which she is reading to innocent attentive Bruin, who meanwhile carefully holds the girl's basket. Too finished for a sketch, it is yet only the sketch for an intended picture by my dear old friend and comrade, Edward Wehnert, the English painter in water-colors, whose designs in illustration of Grimm's stories for children are full of the same quaint and dainty fancy. A photograph of the painter is above the picture, with other memorials grouped around: a small oil painting by another friend, William Bell Scott, poet and painter, of himself and wife sitting before their hearth in Kentish Town, reminding me of pleasant evenings spent with them in my early days; a photograph of Penkill Castle, formerly an old Scottish keep, near Girvan in Ayrshire, where nearly half a century later I visited Scott, then an invalid, there passing away to death; a photograph of Leeds Castle, near Maidstone, in Kent, another memorandum of quite youthful time, where indeed I made my first attempt at out-door sketching; a photograph of Father Damien, the devoted and heroic priest who gave himself to live and die among the lepers; another, a French caricature representing Louis Napoleon as a crippled tramp going out of Sedan with the little Prince Imperial in a basket on his back; a very small crayon wood-scene by Homer Martin; and an oil portrait by myself of an old lady, the good great-grandmother of my grandchildren. Below the picture of the Child and Bear is a row of photographs: W. B. Scott, my friend of but one year less than half a century; Miss Boyd, the kindly, generous *châtelaine* of Penkill, by whom my friend in his last days was nursed and under whose roof he died; William Page, the American painter, and Wendell Phillips, the Abolitionist orator (both of whom I dared to call my friends); and Benjamin Franklin Stevens, of Vermont and London, by whose generous help I was enabled to bring out my "Masters of Wood-Engraving." Beneath, leaning against a large portfolio, is a bit of the Thames side by Whistler.

The bear-picture, *et cætera*, on the easel shut out the light from the corner of the room, and hide the closed blinds on one of two windows on the eastern side. Between the two windows hangs a photograph of the original drawing by Alfred Stevens (the sculptor of the monument to the Duke of Wellington in St. Paul's Cathedral in London) for the diplomas of the International Exhibition in London in 1861. A photograph of the artist himself is on a music-stand close by. Under his diploma-drawing on the wall is a water-color of a magnolia blossom by Clara Lane, the accomplished daughter of Richard Lane, the etcher and lithographer, brother of Edward Lane the Egyptologist. In front on a low chair there are portraits (engravings) of Mazzini, the Russian patriot Herzen, and Ruskin.

Past the second window is another chair, holding books too large for the book-shelves: leaning against the chair-back a volume of "Selec-

tions from the Works of David Scott," the great Scottish painter, etched by his brother William, and published by the Art Union of Glasgow; and against that a photograph of Vedder's picture of Marsyas piping to the hares in the forest. Lying on the chair are the "Works of Alfred Stevens;" his "Biography;" Raffaele's "Planets," engraved by Dorigny; W. B. Scott's "Illustrations to the King's Quair" (the poem written by King James of Scotland when he was a prisoner in England); Fullarton's handsomest edition of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with the designs of David and William Scott; and Victor Hugo's "Châtiments," not too big for the book-shelves, but lying there as in a place of special honor, beside an essay by Estienne de la Boëtie (the friend of Montaigne), "De la Servitude volontaire ou Le Contr'un," doubly valued for its preface by Lamennais. In the corner of the room, behind this book-chair, are four small pictures: a Roman Peasant Girl, in water-color, by Wehnert, and in oil "Wicked Eyes" by W. J. Hennessy, a brook-scene by John Fitch, and a fresh spring landscape by Griswold,—the last three on the southern side of the corner. Two doors come next: the first opening to the outer door and entrance of the house, the second to a closet. Nailed against the closet door is Dorigny's masterly engraving of Raffaele's Transfiguration.

And then comes the open fireplace. On and over the wide chimney-piece are many things of value in themselves or as treasured memorials: a bit of plaster some five inches by four, no larger, on which is seen in relief, like antique gems, in six rows, the whole of the Panathenaic procession of the Parthenon, a miniature copy, by a son of John Henning, the sculptor, of his father's larger work; a small bas-relief by Stevens; a statuette of an Egyptian male figure of fine proportions; a photograph of the head of the dead Christ, from Domenichino; a little oil sketch of a girl by W. S. Coleman; a beautifully modelled dagger in a modelled sheath, presented to Mazzini by an Italian Workmen's Association; a bronze medal struck for the French Democracy, the work of the great sculptor David d'Angers, to hold to execration the Austrian massacre of the Polish nobles in Galicia in 1846; a pipe (the gift of an old friend, not often used), some Japanese fans, and shells; photographs of my young children, and of Mazzini, Captain de Rohan (Mazzini's friend and my own,—Garibaldi's helper in Sicily), Dr. Rimmer (the talented physician and sculptor and master of the School of Design at the Cooper Institute in New York), Mary Hallock Foote, and (too early dead) a daughter of my friend William Page.

Under the chimney-piece is a long Japanese design of armed men fighting with a giant. Then between the fireplace and a door at the western corner of the room hang a little drawing of a polyanthus by Godfrey Sykes, of the South Kensington Museum; two designs by my early friend Thomas Sibson (by the artist-world long since forgotten, but of rare ability), one of a "School in the Time of Alfred,"—a design approved by Kaulbach,—the other an admirable Hogarthian composition of a Saturday night's "Cash Payment" to the workers at a factory; a beautiful head of an old lady (the daughter of De Quincey,—a photograph); a photograph of a saint's head by Titian; and another pho-

tograph, fourteen inches by two feet and eight inches in height, of a portion of Raffaele's cartoon of the Beautiful Gate, the basket-bearing woman with the child.

Against the door beginning the western side of the room are a photograph of David Scott and an original drawing by him of a subject for Professor Nichol's "Starry Heavens,"—"Hearing the eternal melodies of the spheres." Then follow a proof of one of Turner's glorious views in Richmondshire, "Hardraw Fell," over an old chest, an engraved portrait of Michel Angelo, a photograph of the Milo Venus, and two prints of my own work, one of Page's Mask of Shakspeare, drawn by him of colossal size for a placard. These fill up the western wall of the room. Back at the north are my book-shelves, not many books, but a choice remainder, and some goodly gifts from friends; and so I travel back to the windowed recess in which my work-table stands. The death-masque of Cromwell hangs high at my left hand; beneath it are Houbraken's portraits of Vane, Pym, Ireton, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Thomas More; and yet closer to the window a printer's proof of a perfect steel engraving, by Finden or Goodall, of a scene from the *Bride of Lammermoor*; and a small water-color of Edinburgh Castle, by W. Leighton Leitch. So I complete the circuit of my study, the room in which I live and have my being, dwelling in good company among the memories of a varied and busy life. A round table in the middle of the room helps to bear some of an artist's litter; and for lazy moments there is a large easy-chair against the book-shelves; in front of it, hiding so much of the matted floor, a great gray wolf's skin from Idaho.

Outside the door on which hang David Scott's portrait and drawing I cross a narrow passage to the door of my printing-room. On this door is a large etching of fanciful fairy stuff by the German Neurother; and in the passage is space enough for a couple of frames of my own works and for a long strip from that largest of all engravings (nearly ten feet square), Maximilian's Arch of Triumph, by Albert Dürer. My printing-room is hung round with engravings: the centre of the Maximilian Arch, the Angels staying the Winds, from Dürer's "Apocalypse," the Ecce Homo and the Descent into Hell, from his "Greater Passion," the Flight into Egypt, from the History of the Virgin; groups from Burghair; cuts from the early Block-Books,—the "Apocalypsis," the "Canticum Canticorum," the "Biblia Pauperum," and the "Ars Moriendi," the St. Christopher of 1423 (colored); and of later work Clennell's "Diploma for the Highland Society," Harvey's "Assassination of Dentatus" (from Haydon's painting), Alfred Stevens's Monument to the Duke of Wellington; and a photograph of a Swiss waterfall by Turner.

My book-shelves occupy the space between the northwestern corner of the study and my work-table. I may name a few books for which I have special affection: Milton's Complete Works; Vane's Retired Man's Meditations (the edition of 1655); The Life and Death of Sir Henry Vane Knt. (printed in 1662); Sir John Eliot's Monarchy of Man, 2 vols., No. 56 of the only edition (Grosart's) of one hundred; Chapman's Homer, 2 vols., with Flaxman's designs; Paroles d'un

Croyant, by the Abbé Lamennais, 1835; Scritti di Giuseppe Mazzini, 10 vols. (Milan and Rome); 6 vols. of Mazzini's Life and Writings (London); Foi et Avenir, by Mazzini; République et Royauté, by Mazzini (George Sand's translation); Actes Officielles de la République Romaine; Flaxman's Designs for the Divina Commedia of Dante; Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, illustrated by David Scott; sundry volumes of the works of George Sand (French and English); the Bhagavad Gita; Complete Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, 2 vols. (Grosart); Works of Andrew Marvell, 4 vols.; Works of John Davies of Hereford, 2 vols.; Crashaw's Works, 2 vols.; Joseph and his Brethren, by Charles Wells (the friend of Keats), and Stories after Nature, by the same; Essays and Sketches of Character, by Richard Aytoun; Davison's Rhapsody, 2 vols., edited by Arthur H. Bullen; Lowell's Biglow Papers; Piers the Ploughman (Skeat); Chaucer's Prologue and Knight's Tale (Rev. R. Morris); Bacon's Essays and Wisdom of the Ancients, 1668; Sir Thomas Browne's Religio Medici; The Dean's English, G. Washington Moon; Mrs. Gaskell's Cranford (illustrations by Hugh Thomson); Ruskin's Love's Meinie and Unto this Last; Autobiographical Notes of W. B. Scott, 2 vols.; the Life of Captain John Brown; Poems by D. G. Rossetti; Swinburne's Laus Veneris and Atalanta in Calydon; Callirrhoe and Fair Rosamond, by "Michael Field;" Morley's English Literature; Rossel's Posthumous Papers; Savage on Decorative Printing; Torriano's Italian Dictionary, 1559; etc.

Not to be left unmentioned are some presentation copies from the authors, with their added value for sake of the friendly givers: Leigh Hunt's Poems, taken from the shelf in his own library and given by him to me; Conversations of Greeks and Romans, and the Last Fruit off an Old Tree, gracious gifts from Walter Savage Landor; Cosmo de' Medici, The Death of Marlowe, Orion, and Sithron the Star-Stricken, from R. H. Horne; Mundi et Cordis Carmina, The Contention of Death and Love, and other poems, from Thomas Wade; Ricordi dei Fratelli Bandiera, 1844, from Mazzini; The Crown of Wild Olive, from Ruskin; John Bodwin's Testimony, The Led-Horse Claim, and The Chosen Valley, from Mrs. Foote; Memoir of David Scott, Prince Legion, Poems, and A Poet's Harvest Home, from W. B. Scott; Dictionnaire Socialiste, and Le Savetier de Messine, from Claude Pelletier; Young Ireland, and Conversations with Carlyle, from Sir Charles Gavan Duffy; Poems, from Richard Henry Stoddard; Leaves of Grass, and The Rivulet, from Walt Whitman; The Early Italian Poets, from Dante G. Rossetti; Bewick and his Pupils, and Old World Idylls, from Austin Dobson; Karl's Legacy, 2 vols., from the Rev. J. Woodfall Ebbsworth; Poems, from E. C. Stedman; My Witness, from William Winter; London Lyrics, from Frederick Locker; Dorothy, and Susan, from Arthur J. Munby; Corn and Poppies, from Cosmo Monkhouse.

Among other gift-books, not from the authors, I may also note a few: David Scott's Works, and the Selection of his Works published by the Glasgow Art Union, presents from his brother; The Works of Dr. Thomas Campion (now first collected), from the editor, Arthur H.

Bullen; two volumes of Elizabethan Lyrics, from the same; Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow, from their editor, C. J. Firth; Alfred Stevens, his Life and Works (large folio); the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyám, from Stoddard; Keats's Poetical Works, from H. Buxton Forman; The King's Quair, from W. B. Scott; Northcote's Fables, 1833 (2d series, on India paper), from Alexander Farnum, of Providence; two volumes of Forster's Life of Sir John Eliot, from the printer, John Robson (his own copy); and, less in size, not in estimation, Victor Hugo's *Châtiments*, from my dear old Polish friend, Stanislas Worcell.

W. J. Linton.

THE MENU OF MANKIND.

FIRST AND SECOND COURSES.

NATURE has provided a vast, curious, and interesting bill of fare for mankind at this great table of the earth. The elements that contribute to it come from all seas, lands, climates, atmospheres; and they come swimming, creeping, flying, climbing. The ogre man, going about seeking what he may devour, devours almost every thing he sees; he does not care whether it comes out of the depths of the ocean, the ground, or the encompassing sky. The only question he asks is, Is it good for me to eat? that answered favorably, he opens his mouth and swallows; neither queer and ugly shape nor repulsive color will make him shrink. In his long experience of eating he has learned that the taste of some things is not pleasant, that some make sick, and some kill; these he lets alone; the rest he eats.

There is a Greek myth about some giant who ate the earth. Man is that giant. Man has been defined as "an omnivorous biped who wears breeches." This is not in its entirety a true definition, for all men do not wear breeches. But the first part is almost true, and relatively to other creatures it is quite true. Other creatures confine themselves to comparatively simple fare; an ox wants only grass and corn; a lion wants only flesh of certain kinds; but man takes in the whole range of the earth's products, in some of its species.

Nature has arranged foods for her favorite, man, to whom she has given so great an appetite, in what may be called natural courses. As we sit down to table with mankind, we will take a glance at the whole bill of fare. At the top of the list are the mollusks and crustaceans, those skeletonless creatures whose tender, delicate substance melts in the mouth with so delicious a flavor. Most famous of these, used from remote times by savage and civilized peoples, whose shell-heaps remain in evidence, is the oyster, native to all temperate seas, but found in greatest perfection along the coasts of Europe and the Atlantic coasts of North America. The oyster did not have to await the appreciation of the cultivated epicure, but won his way into the affections and stomach of the primitive man, who, as Lang elegantly puts it, "dwelt in a cave by the seas, and lived upon oysters and foes."

The Atlantic coasts of North America afford for the delectation of mankind another shell-fish, which is second only to the one we have been considering in the qualities that charm the palate; that is, the clam. Whether in a "clam-bake," according to the custom of the Indians, or in soup, or in chowder, or on the half-shell, it is a joy forever.

The edible crab of Europe, the *carabus* of the Romans, found on the rocky coasts of Europe, and the edible crab found on the Atlantic coast of North America from Long Island Sound southward in all inlets and bays, though vicious and ugly in disposition and look, when either hard or soft, boiled, broiled, or devilled, is a dish for a king.

From all the seas of Europe, and from the Atlantic coast of North America, the lobster comes forth to take his place on the big table of the world.

Appreciated first by Northmen, Saxons, and Danes, and now esteemed by the subjects of Victoria, are the whelks of the North Sea and all the coasts of Great Britain, and the periwinkles of Scotland, the Orkneys, the Shetlands, and part of the Irish coast.

The sea mussel (*Mytilus edulis*), found on both sides of the Northern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean, is scarcely inferior in commercial value to the oyster. Two hundred and eighty thousand pounds of mussels are annually exported from Antwerp to Paris alone to be used as human food. It is a curious fact that on the Atlantic coast of the United States the sea-mussel is not used either for food or for bait. The fresh-water mussels of the United States were eaten by the aborigines, and their shells are found in the remains of the villages of the mound-builders.

Of land-snails the *Helix pomatia*, known as the "edible snail," is the largest, and is eaten in France, Italy, and Spain. These snails are farmed in the United States and sold in New York markets in recent years.

The estuary of the Thames, and Morecambe Bay, Lancashire, furnish shrimp and prawns.

The common cockles (*Cardium edule*) are bivalves found around the British coast and extending from Iceland to the Canaries and as far east as the Caspian and Aral Seas. At Starcross in England they have cockle-gardens where these are reared. Some species of *Cardium* is eaten by maritime people of almost every country. Their remains are found in the Danish kitchen-middens.

This exhausts the course on the menu so far as mollusks and crustaceans are concerned. Here are included some dishes of venerable antiquity, while others men have but recently ventured to eat. They learned to eat shell-fish by watching shrewd animals which thrust sticks or paws between the open shells of bivalves when feeding, and birds that carried them into the air, dropping the victims upon stones.

The second course at the big table consists of fish and reptiles. At what feasts one can sit if he so chooses! What variety! Blessed be not only the man who invented sleep, but they also who found out so many things to eat. How bountiful is nature! Civilization indeed

sits at a banquet gathered from all nations; Monte-Cristo's feast is outdone by fact.

We see the gleaming scales of fish, drawn from oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and brooks for the feast. Here among fresh-water kinds are the perch, generally distributed over Europe, Northern Asia, and North America, and pikes, most voracious of fresh-water fishes, having the same habitats, the largest of the kind being the muskalonge of the Great Lakes. The pike-perch is one of the best of European food-fishes; it is the "zander" of North Germany, and prefers large rivers and clear deep lakes. The second European species is limited to rivers in Southern Russia and Hungary. There are two kinds in North America, in Canadian lakes, the upper Mississippi, and the Ohio.

The tench is of Europe; the common trout is of the northern States of North America; the golden carp is of China, while other carp are found in European waters, and the climber belongs in the East Indies. To the Siluridæ, fresh-water, belongs the "carmoot" of the Nile. The glanis is, with the exception of the sturgeon, the largest fresh-water fish in Europe; to these (Siluridæ) belong the "catfish" of North America, and the "shal" of the Nile, pictured by ancient Egyptians.

The fishes we improperly call sunfish are found in fresh water in North America, while the ones properly so called are marine and are not edible. The sand perch are of the fresh waters of Northern Germany and Southern Russia, the Danube, and the Caspian. The cui-rassier lives in brooks in South America; the Malapterurus is of Egypt and Senegambia; the loaches are of the fresh waters of Europe and Asia; the bream is of Europe; the roach is of Europe north of the Alps.

The rivers and lakes of Europe, Asia, and North America are homes of the sturgeon, whose roe furnishes material for caviare. It was a royal fish under Edward II. of England; the Lord Mayor of London can claim all the sturgeon caught in the Thames above London Bridge.

If you wish, you can join some semi-savages in eating the alligators of North and South America. Or, still better, you can find the crocodile regularly sold in the markets of Siam as human food.

The products of salt water are equally attractive with those of fresh water: there are many noble gifts of the sea, clean, pure, and wholesome, on the big table. In what deep places is food being prepared for us! What shining creatures they are we take thence! The mackerel belongs to almost all the tropical and temperate seas, except the Atlantic shores of South America. The home of the common mackerel is the North Atlantic. Sea and fresh water both give us bass, the one the striped kind, the other the black, and both good. The coasts of temperate Europe and the Atlantic coasts of North America give us shad. The North American coast gives us the drum.

The Mediterranean, that blue sash about the waist of the Old World, gives us anchovies: the best are from Gorgona, an island near Leghorn. These were esteemed by the Greeks and Romans, and sold in the markets of Athens and Rome. The sardine, or pilchard, is found in the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic coasts of Europe. A similar

species is found on the Pacific coasts of North America, in New Zealand, and in Japan.

The Atlantic coasts of Europe, and the coasts of Tasmania and New Zealand, yield sprats, which are eaten fresh, pickled, smoked, and prepared like anchovies. The genus *Clupea* is the most abundant of all sea-fishes; of this genus the most important species to man is the common herring. The German Ocean, the northern parts of the Atlantic, and the seas north of Asia yield them in incredible numbers. The esteemed whitebait are the young of the herring. The German Ocean and waters about Great Britain yield whiting, one of the most valuable food-fishes of Northern Europe.

Salmon are both fresh-water and marine, and inhabit seas, rivers, and lakes of temperate regions; of these there are many varieties. Of mullets there are about forty species, in the tropical and subtropical Indo-Pacific Ocean. In the Atlantic the species are less numerous. The most celebrated is the *Mullus barbatus* of the Mediterranean and the coasts of England and Ireland; it was prized by the Romans, and lifted by their praise into fame. All species of red mullets are esteemed as food. The "barbatus" the Romans allowed to die at table before going to the cook. The gray mullets, while edible, are not held in equal esteem.

The letter-fish of the Mediterranean finds a place at the table. The John Dory of the Atlantic coasts of Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Australian seas was much esteemed by the ancient Greeks. The gurnet finds a home in all the seas of Europe. The flying-fish belongs in southern seas, and is rarely seen in the Mediterranean. The daurade of the Mediterranean was greatly esteemed by the ancient Romans, and is still considered a dainty. The tunny of the Mediterranean was dedicated by the ancient Greeks to Diana, and the Italians have its image on their coins. Tunnies salted in Sardinia were specially prized by the Romans.

The sword-fish, found in all oceans, and abundant in the Mediterranean, affords fins that are considered a special luxury.

How many fine palates must have tried all these things to find out what was best!

The wolf perch of the Mediterranean was on the roll of honor among the ancients. Gudgeons flourish in the seas of Europe and in the Mediterranean. The skate is found in every sea, chiefly in northern waters. The lamprey of the coasts of Europe and North America is highly esteemed, though its flesh is not easy of digestion. Henry I. of England is said to have eaten this his favorite dish once too often, so that a lamprey may be said to have wrested the crown from a king. The trunk-fish of the East and West Indies, and the sole of marine and fresh waters in temperate and tropical zones, are both good.

The *Muræna*, a species of eel found in the Mediterranean, was prized by the Romans. Vidius Pollio, a friend of Augustus, threw slaves into eel-vats to be devoured, saying that human flesh improved their flavor. The turbot belongs to all the coasts of Europe. The ling, a species of cod, has its habitat in the North Atlantic. The haddock, one of the most valuable food-fishes of Europe, is from

the North Atlantic. The delicious taste of the celebrated Finnan haddocks, when prepared for market, is due to the kind of grass used in making the fires in which they are smoked. The cod of the northern and temperate seas of Europe, Asia, and America has a universal fame, and carries the names of a great many men who make oil from its liver; while the codfish balls of New England have established a record for themselves by giving the descendants of the Puritans dyspepsia. Hakes are of the coasts of Europe and Eastern North America.

No part of whales (which, by the way, are not fishes, but mammals), whose home is the Arctic seas, now finds a place on the tables of civilized men, but in the year 1261 a tithe was laid on all whales' tongues brought into Bayonne, they being at that time highly esteemed as food. But whales afford a principal food to many inhabitants of the Arctic regions. An Esquimau will eat all the whale blubber he can manage in a sitting posture, and will then lie down while his wife feeds him more bits until he is as full as an anaconda, whereupon he rolls over asleep. Isinglass is a gelatin prepared from the air-bladders of different kinds of fish from large rivers that flow into the North and Caspian Seas.

The walrus, of hyperborean regions, is an important article of food to Esquimaux and Tchuktehis, the tongue being specially prized.

The sea yields also many edible tortoises. There are two hundred and twenty species of Chelonians, but the greater number belong to fresh water. The *Trionychidæ* of Europe and of the East Indies are edible. The *Dermatemys* of America is eaten. The Moorish and Greek tortoises from Morocco are imported into Europe. The giant tortoises of the Mascarene and Galapagos Islands are eaten by sailors. Some of the marine turtles are greatly esteemed both for flesh and for eggs. The green turtle is a native of the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic. Turtles imported into Europe are chiefly from the West Indies. The hawksbill turtle, eaten by the Chinese, is not relished by Europeans, who, however, enjoy its eggs. The *Trionyx ferox* of the United States and the European swamp tortoise are both eaten.

Most famous of all the tortoises is the "diamond-back terrapin." The name "terrapin" is an Algonkin word for a species of tortoise. The diamond-back is technically *Chelonia malaclemmys*, and its habitat is the Atlantic waters of North America; it is at its best in Chesapeake Bay.

Of the *Muraenidæ* there are twenty-six genera and two hundred and thirty species inhabiting the seas and fresh water of temperate and tropical regions. Of these only the true eels inhabit fresh water, and most of these are likewise marine. They were greatly prized by the Greeks and the Romans, but were despised by the Egyptians. They have been esteemed in England from very early times, where the taste for them was probably introduced by the Romans. The electric eel of Brazil and the Guianas is eaten by the Indians, who drive their horses into the water to receive the electric discharges until the fish is exhausted.

The custom of salting and smoking fish is a very ancient one.

Calvin Dill Wilson.

THE
BATTLE OF SALAMANCA:

A TALE OF THE NAPOLEONIC WAR.

BY

BENITO PÉREZ GALDÓS,

AUTHOR OF "DOÑA PERFECTA," "GLORIA," "LA INCÓGNITA,"
"TRAFALGAR," ETC.

TRANSLATED BY

ROLLO OGDEN.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY.

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